

SELECT LETTERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



91017

SELECT LETTERS

BETWEEN

THE LATE DUCHESS OF SOMERSET,
LADY LUXBOROUGH, | MR. WHISTLER,
MISS DOLMAN, | MR. R. DODSLEY,
WILLIAM SHENSTONE, ESQ.
AND OTHERS;

INCLUDING A SKETCH OF THE

MANNERS, LAWS, &c.

OF THE

REPUBLIC OF VENICE,

AND SOME POETICAL PIECES;

THE WHOLE NOW FIRST PUBLISHED

FROM ORIGINAL COPIES,

By Mr. HULL.

.....

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

.....

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, PALL-MALL,

MDCCLXXVIII.

SELECT LETTERS

OF THE

THE LATE DUCHESS OF SOMERSET

LADY HENRIETTA, MRS. WHISTLER,
AND MRS. DOWD



WILLIAM DODD, 1852

AND

PRINTED BY THE

PRINTERS, LONDON

OF THE

REPUBLIC OF VENICE

AND SOME OTHER

FROM ORIGINAL

IN THE

OF THE

IN TWO

VOL.

OF THE

LONDON

PRINTED BY A COMPANY

OF THE

P R E F A C E.

THE Letters, which I have herewith the Honour and Happinefs of offering to the Public, were to me the voluntary Gift of an elegant Friend of the late Mr. SHENSTONE; of a Friend, who, like myself, loved his private Virtues, and admired his literary Abilities; and if the Value of fuch a Gift could have received Enhancement, it was effectually derived from the polite Manner wherein it was prefented. The following Extracts from fome Letters which accompanied them, will fhew on what unreferved Stipulations I received them, and confequently will (I hope) juftify the Ufe I make of them.

Extract the first, from a Letter dated
Nov. 9, 1775.

“ I herewith perform my Promise ; as
“ I found the Letters in my Bureau, so I
VOL. I. A “ send

“ send them to you, having neither Time
 “ nor Spirits to look them over. They
 “ are now your own, with full Permission
 “ to apply them to any Purpose you think
 “ proper. I shall be glad if they answer
 “ your Expectation. As *some* of them are
 “ those of a Friend so highly valued, they
 “ will, with *you*, I know, have Merit, and,
 “ I hope, with the *World*. Of the latter,
 “ however, you are the best Judge, and
 “ to your Decision I implicitly trust them.
 “ I wish I could add much more—the little
 “ I can, I will. PINDAR’S Odes, VER-
 “ NON’S Poems, (with Observations by
 “ Mr. SHENSTONE) and the *Gentle Shep-*
 “ *herd*, were *all his*, and as such I hope
 “ you will accept them, in Remembrance
 “ of him. Besides the Letters which are
 “ tied up, the Parcel will contain Remarks
 “ on MILTON’S *Paradise Lost*, Copies of
 “ the Dukes of SOMERSET’S Letters,
 “ (transcribed by Mr. SHENSTONE*) and
 “ bound

* These particular Letters (I should presume) will
 unquestionably be allowed to deserve the Character
 which Mr. SHENSTONE has prefixed to them in his
 Transcript. It is as follows :

“ Copies

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“ bound in Vellum, three loose in the
“ Leaves, (her Grace’s own Hand-Wri-
“ ting) the *Scotch* Fragments, and a little
“ Memorandum-Book, over which, per-
“ haps, you will like to spend Half an
“ Hour, though it contains nothing but
“ *Names*.”

Again, in a Letter, dated *April* 4, 1776.

“ Have you seen, or heard from Mr.
“ — ? Have you yet got, or are you like-
“ ly to get, that Letter of the Dúchefs of
“ SOMERSET’s which was missing ? I hope
“ so—May Success attend you ! When the
“ whole is digested and revised, I have no
“ Doubt of its being valuable.”

This explicit Disclosure of the liberal
Means, by which these Letters came into

“ Copies of Letters from her Grace the Dúchefs
“ Dowager of SOMERSET (formerly Countess of
“ *Hertford*) in which is discernible a perfect Rectitude
“ of Heart, Delicacy of Sentiment, and a truly-classic
“ Ease and Elegance of Style. There are many of
“ them tinged with an Air of Melancholy, thro’ the
“ Loss of her only Son, Lord BEAUCHAMP.”

my Hands, will, I presume, confirm the Authenticity of them, if they can be supposed to stand in Need of such Confirmation; I say, *if they can*, for surely they possess indubitable Marks of Originality, and require no adventitious Evidence to support them.

Being thus possessed of such an unlimited Power, my first Care was to make the most cautious and delicate Use of it. I have accordingly suppressed all entire Letters, as well as distinct Passages, which appeared to contain Matter improper for public Inspection; all, in Fact, which might be liable (in the slightest Degree) to Misconstruction, either relative to the Writer, or the Party addressed, or that might awaken unwelcome Feelings in the Breast of any surviving Friend or Relation. I have likewise, where a Correspondent is introduced, or other Person alluded to, who may be still alive, (tho' most of the Correspondents, I am convinced, are dead) I have, I say, on such Occasions, preserved only Initials of the Names, in order that public Curiosity should be no further

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further gratified than might be agreeable to the Parties concerned.

After what I have advanced to prove the nice Precaution I have taken, does this pleasing, and, at the same Time, useful Undertaking of mine stand in Need of an Apology?—I hope not.—I flatter myself, the very Persons, to whose Situations I have alluded in the foregoing Paragraph, will confess, it does not. Not to say a Word of my own Principles, I affirm that the bare Idea of a Publication, wherein Mr. SHENSTONE's Talents are displayed, or wherein even his Name is mentioned, would deter me from advancing one Step beyond the Bounds of Propriety and Decorum.

Yet, notwithstanding all I have said in Self-Justification, I know there are some very peculiar (if I dared, I would call them *over-nice*) Persons, who alledge, that no private Letters should be made public, without the Consent of the Writers of such Letters. This I will readily allow to be a good *general* Rule, but, like many others, may

admit of an Exception, in particular Instances ; and these Instances are, where a *proper Mode* of introducing them to the World is inviolably attended to. It is a well-known, and equally uncontrovertible, Maxim, that Persons of the highest Excellence (especially in the literary Walk) are possessed of the greatest Reserve and Diffidence. Were the private Sentiments of such to be with-held from the Public, till their individual Consent were obtained, what a Loss would it be to the Republic of Letters, and what an Injury to moral Improvement ! Any Person's general Principles and Ideas may be seen, perhaps, in the respective public Profession and Situation of Life, and their general Intercourse with Mankind ; but the innate Sensations, the more refined Emanations of the Mind, are alone discoverable in the private Communications of Friendship. There can therefore be no unpardonable Liberty in *decoying*, or even *gently-compelling* such Deservers into public Notice ; nor is it, by any Means, uncharitable to suppose, there may be many, who would not be violently displeased to see their Sentiments in Print,
how,

however reluctant they might, and, perhaps, ought to appear, if their particular Permission were applied for.

To illustrate and enforce this Position, let me be permitted to ask, if the Duchess of SOMERSET had been requested to have suffered her Letters to be made public, whether she would have consented? Probably not—Yet what an Advocate would moral Virtue, pious Resignation, and genuine Piety have been deprived of, if those exquisite Transcripts of her Mind had been concealed from public View!—It is, moreover, Matter of great Doubt, whether we should have been so well acquainted with the Talents of a SHENSTONE, had Providence indulged the Wishes of his most intimate Friends and Acquaintances, in prolonging so valuable a Life.

Thus it has been, is, and will be, with most People of distinguished Abilities; their Excellencies must, in a Manner, be *forced* into Day-light, or we should lose the Benefit of their Precepts; they might otherwise be said, like Misers, to have a valuable Trea-

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sure buried with them, which ought, in common Justice, to be left behind for the Advantage of Survivors.

I have, I doubt, been too prolix; but the Fear of offending, or, at least, a Desire to wipe off the Stain of such an *Intention*, has led me into it. I hope, I stand exculpated; and now beg only to conclude, with sincere Thanks to the Gentleman, who politely obliged me with Letter XXVII. of the *Duchess of SOMERSET's*, and my most grateful Acknowledgements to the first mentioned Friend, who conferred on me the elegant Pleasure of conveying to the Public some few more Excellencies of that benevolent Man whose living Talents I admired, and whose Memory I revere.

THOMAS HULL.

London, Dec. 18, 1777.

* * * The accurate Reader will discover some Letters erroneously placed in Point of Date, owing principally to some Copies not being received early enough for their proper Situations; but as no Chain of Events is interrupted thereby, it is hoped the Error may easily be excused.

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L E T T E R I.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. D—.

Oct. 19, 1736.

I AM sorry to put you to an Expence for a trifling Letter at this Distance. It seems too, to give you leave to expect something extraordinary, or uncommon. Whatever is so in my Letters, I am sure, must be on the bad Side. I may however have the greater Power to convince you, that Distance is incapable to separate you from my Thoughts.

VOL. I.

B

I am,

I am, at present, in a very refined State of Indolence and Inactivity. Indeed I make little more Use of a Country Life, than to live over again the Pleasures of *Oxford* and your Company. You might convey me a Letter full, would you be so exceedingly good as your Promise. I am vastly self-interested, for I write only in order to beg a Letter from you, with very small Hopes of your receiving much Pleasure from mine.

I should here give you an Account of the Pleasures we have had at M——, but my Paper won't contain it. There was one only wanting, *pour le comble*—you'll be the last to find it out—your Company. I aim at rendering my Letters as odd and fantastical as possible; but when I write to a Person of your elegant character, my Compliments degenerate into downright Truths, just (I was going to say) as the Sun turns bad Wine to Vinegar; but downright Truths are sometimes valuable, though a Person of your Taste might reasonably expect more refined—at least less obvious ones. Sometimes, however, Vinegar has also
its

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its Use, though to treat a Gentleman with it entirely may well create a *Nausea*. I fancy my poignant Simile grows stale by this Time. I write to an Intimate, and a Man of Sense, whose Good-nature will forgive what his Judgment may find fault with.

I hope your Ring gives you all imaginable Happiness, however fatal it may prove to female Ken. I suspect to hear of you as the finest Performer on the Spinnet in the World. Were I a Poet, I should be highly pleased to celebrate the admirable Conduct of your little Finger—" *Tui Pollicis Ictum*," says *Horace*; vile Pedant that I am! who shall deliver me from the Influence of Formality?

I heard at *Oxford* of the Addition of the Side-Diamonds; I guessed, lest the Splendour should be extinguished by a greater, *où vous sçavez*. I want to see you exceedingly; you are, I assure you, a vast Part of my Pleasure at *Oxford*, as *POPE* is in the Country; indeed, you might share that Effect with Mr. *POPE*, would you write. It is a Favour, for which I must grow importunate; notwithstanding

B 2

which,

which, the Favours I have already received, would make me uneasy, were I not conscious who bestows them.

Of all the moral Virtues, Gratitude is sure the most beautiful ; so far from betraying any Thing mean or ignoble in her Behaviour, she has an Air which naturally discovers her Quality.—I can't stay to describe her now—It is sufficient that I pay some Sort of Tribute to her, when I call myself Mr. D—'s

Obedient, humble Servant,

W. S.

My humble Service to your Parents.—Direct to *Harborough*.

L E T-

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LETTER II.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Miss G—.

Sent Oct. 30, 1736.

I HAVE sent the Patterns, though with far less Expedition than you might expect from one so entirely yours. The truth is, I was sensible how insupportable the Transition must be from your Company to none at all, so contrived to pay several Visits immediately after I had left M—. You'll guess how sufficient a Mortification I found even thus. To pass from yours to the Company of dull Aunts and Cousins must needs prove tedious, as the Reverse would be agreeable.

As to the Draughts, I am satisfied in what a ridiculous Light they must appear; it was a Task I was very much unused to, and solicited rather out of an officious Fondness to be employed for you, than any Skill I was conscious of in myself. I must beg Mr. G—'s Pardon for engaging in a Work, wherein he is far

B 3

my

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my Superior. Such as they are, I beg you would believe they are the best I am capable of. I would rather have my Judgment than Care censured, in any Thing I am employed in for you. You'll be surprized to find them joined with a Paper scrawl'd over with dull Poetry: however, I must confess, as I wrote it to please myself, I sent it, not without Hopes that it might, in an inferior Manner, please you. One may sometimes amuse one's-self with what one can't entirely approve. As I can't flatter myself, your Judgment can excuse, so I can't apprehend your Good-nature will expose me. To vindicate my Character to you, as a Poet, I shall only join these alleviating Circumstances; First, that nothing makes so aukward a Figure in Verse (as well as in some other Respects) as Sincerity. Secondly, that these Lines were wrote when I had no great Flow of Spirits, namely, when I had just left M—, and you; but I shall want your Patience elsewhere, so will say no more about 'em—only this—that I should not have mentioned Miss L—, were I not persuaded that, as you are entirely free from the other Faults of your Sex,

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Sex, so you are from that of not bearing to hear another commended. It is a Sign of a great Want of Accomplishments, when a Person is continually suspicious of being rivalled; and, for that Part, you may give every One many more than their Due, without the least Danger of being so.

I could not help envying WHISTLER's Happiness, when I came away; I fancy your Lives have been a constant Round of Delights; I don't know any Neighbourhood more likely to produce 'em. I could reconcile myself, however, pretty well to *Harborough's* melancholy Scenes, were I not conscious of such superior Pleasures, *où vous sçavez*. You might convey me a Letter full of them, but you'll, perhaps, think it an impertinent Request. I could set what Value you please on the Favour, though the Pleasure I can't pretend to limit.

I must now break off my Letter in as awkward a Manner as I take my Leave, which is likewise usually most awkward, where I have most Respect. I'll e'en lay aside further Cere-

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mony in this, as in the other Case, and say no more than that I am,

Madam,

Your humble Servant,
(In the most obsolete Sense)

W. S.

LETTER III.

Miss G— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

M—, *May* 12, 1740.

YOU express so great a Concern for my Brother's Illness, that not only common Civility, but Humanity, obliges me to acquaint you, that he is upon the Recovery. His Physicians have thought him out of Danger these three Weeks, as to his Fever, but are apprehensive of a Consumption; to prevent which, they have ordered him a Milk-Diet, as soon as he

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he gets into the Country, which he hopes to do, some Time next Week. My Brother G— is with him. To make the Journey easy, they propose to hire a Chaise, and make three or four Days of it.

DICK has been so compassionate to write to me twice; the First was only to shew me he was alive; in the last Letter he seems to have recovered his usual Spirits, and says, he must be obliged to the most despicable Creature in the Universe for the most valuable Blessing in Life. He is quite determined to leave the Study of Physick, and turn Friar, which I am delighted at, as I believe it will be conducive to his Health,

I think I have been very particular in my Account of my Brother, which you would have received last Post, but that I was from Home when yours came, and did not return till late on Saturday Night. I write this in the greatest Hurry, for Company waits for me to set out for S—: but I must tell you, that I am very angry you should think so meanly of me, as to imagine I had not Generosity enough to
send

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send you an Account of my Brother and your Friend, without the Bribe of a Compliment. Out of Regard, however, I must pardon you.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

M. G.

P. S. The Letter you wrote to Dick, I have locked up in the Cabinet, to give him by Way of Cordial, at his first coming Home.

LETTER IV.

Miss F—R to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

Sept. 6, 1745.

I THINK it would be inconsistent with Gratitude, as well as Good-manners, not to return you Thanks for the Pleasures your Writings have given me; but I shall desist from de-

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declaring my Sentiments of them, lest you should stile it Flattery. Writing has been my constant Employ (when at Home) ever since you left us, and I hope you could not expect them sooner. I could not but think Fate doubly cruel, (when to part us was as much as we *here* could bear with Decency) to embroil us still more by the Hurt of the Leg, which I am glad to hear is got well.

With you fled all Life and Spirit from A—; a total Eclipse succeeded you, and the Sun will shine no more till your *bright Influence* dispels the Cloud. Company and Fruit come in often, but all in vain, for nothing has any Relish, but the Writings of him who caused the Malady. You have shone so much to the Prejudice of our Neighbours, that it is with Difficulty we behave with tolerable Decorum. We drink your Health as constant as Appetite (or rather, Custom) calls to Table, for nothing has any Taste, except the Glass, in which you are named.

We sent *Tom Thumb's* Performance (I think in my Heart it is Nonsense) to Mr. —, who
I
read

read it, called him *nasty Dog*, and put it in his Pocket. Whether it will be a Spit-Cat, or dumb Madness, I don't know; but I am sure the bottled Small-Beer was very brisk last *Sunday*.

From *August* 25th we date our Misery; no Smile seen, or Laugh heard since, till last Night. —What could cause one then?—Why, Mr. SHENSTONE, who had been dumb so long, spoke then, and who can hear him without being pleased? It is meet and right, as well as highly pleasing to Mrs. MARY, that you should respect Mr. A—, who, I believe, intends to spend his last Breath in your Praise, but he'll make your Name glorious. Nothing could give him more Pleasure than you have done, except a Present of Lawn-Sleeves. As to the Scheme you mention, I dare not bid you hope, but I will venture to bid you not despair, on a Presumption that your Rhetorick can never fail of Success.

I can't prevail with my Sisters for a Letter a-piece. One says, that you shall be the next Gentleman she writes to. Mrs. A— says, tho' you

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you cut off your Hair, she believes your Ears will remain, and wishes nothing so much as an Opportunity to pinch 'em. Miss K— says, she has already suffered too much by *that Tyrant, Love*, ever to engage with Mankind more, not even Mr. SHENSTONE; but cannot bear that Miss D— should be so happy. S— says, she would make a handsome Speech, but cannot, and therefore sends you *only Service*. My Brother desires his Compliments, and says, he can't fix a Time for seeing *the Leasowes*, but designs to be at *Broom* with your Brother, in Three Weeks Time. So here you have *the Sayings of the A—ians*. But I have not done yet, till I have been a little more troublesome.

Note. If I did not know you to be a good Judge of Mankind, and had not experienced your Good-nature, (which inclines you to excuse the Foibles of the *weaker Vessel*) together with the Hopes, that, for the Sake of some happy Favourite, you would not expose the Sex, I should not have trusted you with my Nonsense. This concludes, therefore, with desiring one Favour, which is, that you would
burn

14 SELECT LETTERS.

burn this, and that the Flame and my Folly
may die together; and be assured you'll oblige

W. F—R.

I begin to think you have vowed Destruction
to some of my favourite Poets; and must own,
you have given two of them a Wound in the
Side; but if you conquer 'em, you shall never
never know it. Adieu!

LETTER V.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Miss W. F—R,
at A—n.

The *Leasowes*, Nov. 28, 1745.

Dear Miss F—,

ON a Time, as 'tis reported, the Moun-
tains were in Labour; when, after a long
Course of Pains and Inquietudes, they made a
shift to produce that puny Animal, a Mouse.

Now

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Now that very individual Mouse, according to the mysterious and figurative Import of Types and Shadows, was the perfect Image and Representative of this mine Epistle. A groveling, starveling, insignificant Production, conceived with much Difficulty, and transmitted to you with Confusion of Face. In short, you may look upon it as the noble Booty you have taken, by baiting your *Trap* so artfully with Praise and Compliment, about two or three Months ago. True it is, that, considering the Politeness and Complaisance of your obliging Letter, my Behaviour since must appear the most *unknightly* of all Proceedings, But your Packet did not arrive till three Weeks after it was sent; so you will excuse my Silence till the Day after I received it, and whatever was *more* than that, I freely acknowledge, came of Sin. However, you will, upon Confession, pardon me, as you expect Pardon from your Confessor, should the Benedictines and Friars get a Footing in this Island, which I find your Brother is endeavouring to prevent.

I can be no longer ludicrous on this last Article. I am too seriously concerned for his
Safety;

16 SELECT LETTERS.

Safety; yet I don't fear but the Rebels will be defeated, and, it may be, all Danger over in less than a Fortnight. But General WADE's Behaviour, loitering so long at *Newcastle*, astonishes me. I was at *Birmingham* on *Tuesday* Morning, from whence I saw the Remains of LIGONIER's Horse march with vast Spirits and Alacrity. They wish to have, what they call, the *Refusal* of the *Highlanders*. They are Men of experienced Bravery, and fought like Furies at the Battle of *Fontenoy*. May they do so now, and with better Success!

B— told me, your Brother would borrow my Pistols. At that Time, supposing him in Jest, I sent him no very serious Answer. I now think it incumbent on me to say, that I would lend them him with all my Heart, but that one of them is broke in the Stock, and cannot be fired with Safety till it is stocked afresh. Perhaps he might recollect it was so when I was at A—.

We have been best Part of a Week at *Litchfield*, where we lived like Chickens in a Pen, confined and crammed, and where we
served

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served God after the Manner of Popes and Cardinals.—I only allude to Cathedral Service. Mr. and Mrs. D— seemed quite disposed to entertain us agreeably. The Son and Daughter, to say the least, appeared much more indifferent in that Particular. “ These,” as SHAKESPEARE says, “ are certainly better “ Christians, or else, are worse than we.”

You have escaped me at *Birmingham*, by concealing the Time of your Visit. Surely, you will come over to *Broom*, ere it be long, and give me my Revenge.

Tell Mrs. A—, my Ears make great Shoots, and such as may tempt her Hand egregiously: but if I *am* metamorphosed into an Ass entirely, I will come and serenade her in a Morning, when she has been up late the Night before.

I beg my Compliments to all Friends. I must not make my Letter much longer—the Mouse will else grow to the Size of a Rat. I beg you to accept this idle Billet in Part of an Answer to your elegant Letter, and in Lieu

18 SELECT LETTERS.

of a thousand Professions of the Friendship and
Esteem, with which I am,

Dear Miss F—,

Your most obedient

and faithful humble Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER VI.

Miss F— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

Jan. 21, 1745-6.

I HAVE several Times examined myself, to
find out what can authorize or qualify me
to write to Poets and Men of Letters. Upon
strict Enquiry, I am sensible, that nothing I
am possessed of, can entitle me to it, and no-
thing but Vanity and Selfishness could spur
me

me on to this Impertinence; Vanity, in being addressed by a Man of your Capacity and Figure in the World, and Selfishness, as I am sure to be a Gainer by your Correspondence. I must, however, tell you, the Epithets of artful, polite, and witty, I have no Right to. In these Respects, I am an Heroine of your own making, but I attribute all this to the Consequence of that great and generous Mind of your own, and in whose Nature it is to imagine you see in others what you really possess yourself.

I shall not trouble you with a Detail of the Frights, Fears, and dreadful Apprehensions, almost every body has been under, concerning the Devil, the Pope, and the Pretender; 'tis my good Fortune to have more of that strengthening Ingredient, called Hope, than that of the destructive one, called Fear, in my Composition, which has prevented my suffering so much upon the Occasion, as the rest of my Neighbours. For my own Part, I had but one Fear, which was that of my Brother's marching; but I was soon made easy in that Parti-

cular, when I found the *Duke* * had no Occasion for, nor would accept of, the new-raised Regiments. All the neighbouring Gentlemen, who had not Commissions, went Volunteers in Captain WHITMORE's Company, but are all come Home again, and begin to think they have been upon a Don QUIXOTE Expedition, or have done like the King of *France*, and his Forty-thousand.

All the Females are turned Politicians, except myself. I bestowed two Minutes and an half in considering whether I should affect to appear one or not. In the first Minute, my Thoughts suggested to me, that there never would be a Parliament of Women; in the second, I was convinced, if that should happen, it was morally impossible I should ever have a Seat in the House; and the last Half-minute confirmed me in my Resolution, not to meddle with Politics, which, I imagine, was never designed a Province for Women. I shall therefore be content till they act in their proper Sphere,

* Duke of CUMBERLAND, second Son to King GEORGE the Second, who headed the Forces against the Rebels.

and

and Ribbons, and Fans, (which are better adapted to my Capacity) are again their Theme.

What shall I say, as to neighbouring Occurrences? Your Friend, Mr. A—, is very well, and often talks of you. He told me, last Time I was in his Company, he designed himself the Pleasure of calling on you in his Way to B—, early in the Spring. Meeting with *bright* B— the other Day, I desired him to stir up his Muse, to *whip* her, and *lash* her, and put forth something upon the Times. A Gentleman, who sat by, replied, “Perhaps he may “ruin himself in Whip-cord, before he rouses “her.” The *Brobdignags* go on with their Knotting, as usual; but I don’t find that your *favourite* Miss D— designs you any for a Waistcoat.

It was not in my Power to give you more Notice of my Visit to *Birmingham* than I did, as the Time was not fixed above six Days before I set out, in which Time my Brother went to B—, and desired Mr. D— to let you know, when he saw you, (which he said would be in a Day or two) you would think you had

Revenge enough, if you knew how I was disappointed. At last, *I sighed within myself*, and said, "Surely, the Favour is more than I can
"merit."

I shall now *cry aloud*, and say, *Wo unto them* that forget their Promise, for therein is their Fidelity called in Question!—*Wo unto them* that erase out of their Letters what they had written, for thereby they injure the Brain of *her* that would find it out!—*Wo unto them* that are three Months in answering a Letter, for surely it must tire the Patience of *her*, who is, all that Time, in Expectation!—*Woful Truths!*

S—*the Valiant* desires his Compliments, and thanks you for the Offer of your Pistols, which Favour he never asked, as he did not imagine they should fight with Pistols. He has been at Home this Month recruiting. I don't doubt but the *Shropshire Fusileers* will make a great Figure in military History—at least, in the *Prints*. The tender, the wild, the grave, and the mild, all lump their Compliments.

By

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By the Time you come to this Place, (which, without a double Share of Patience, you will never arrive at) you must be greatly disappointed, as you'll then find the Sum Total of all I have said amounts to Nothing: but don't then blame Nature, Education, or the Stars that presided at my Birth, that I'm not a Novelist, nor capable of saying any Thing that can possibly entertain you herein, but *rather* blame your own wrong Choice in a Correspondent. I will now, out of Compassion to you, put an End to this unparalleled Piece of Nonsense, by wishing you the Compliments of the Season, and assuring you, that I am,

Sir,

Your obliged and humble Servant,

W. F—.

P. S. Who is the Author of *Bishop RIDLEY's Ghost*, a Poem just come out, which I suppose you have seen?—I shall be in daily Expectation of the Book you promised, till it comes.

LETTER VII.

Miss F— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Sir,

A—, *March* 19, 1745-6.

IT can't possibly be otherwise, than that I shall soon arrive at the Pinnacle of the Temple of Vanity, in full Persuasion of the just and deserved Encomiums on my Letters. In the Name of all that's sincere and honest, let me prevail with you to leave off Flattery, and act the Plain-Dealer; and let it suffice, when I tell you, that the grand Compliment of all is, that you think my Letters worthy an Answer, which alone is sufficient to feed my Vanity.

Now, lest you should not immediately recollect the fatal Consequences, that may attend Flattery, from a Person one may chance to have a good Opinion of, imagine that you see me intoxicated to the greatest Degree that weak Woman is capable of; in order to which,
you

you are to suppose that I have taken it into my Head, that the House I live in, is not embellished with Ornaments and Decorations fit for me to inhabit; that the Meat I eat is too coarse for my delicate Constitution, and Ortolans alone fit for my Palate; that the Conversation of my own Family is quite despicable; my Neighbours not worth my Notice; that the Air is not pure enough for me to breathe; in fine, that I am a *celestial Creature*, far superior to the Race of Mortals on Earth. And, should this happen, you must then smite your Breast, and say, "Alas! these are the Effects of Flattery!—Which shall deter me from the Practice of it upon Womankind for the future." I know 'tis a received Maxim with most Men, that no Woman can be pleased without Flattery; but why might there not be an Exception to this Rule? If my Letters are polite, 'tis what I never designed; nor do I think you could possibly expect they should be so, from a little Garret, in a Corner of a House, in a Corner of the World; and from one who has nothing more to boast of, than the common Gifts of Nature, without any other

Assis-

Assistance than what proceeds from her Hand-
maid *Time*.

As to your Dispute with Mr. B—, 'tis so like that between the *Turks* and *Persians*, that I fancy it won't be determined soon. For my own Part, tho' the Fighters have done little, I am inclined to think the Writers have done less; for, as yet, I have not seen one Line in the poetical Way, but what a B— may rival; and as to historical Facts, I think they hang much upon Uncertainties. As it probably will be demanded of every true Englishman, what he has done in Defence, or to the Honour of his Country, I would fain know, if you are provided with an hundred Pages to throw in the Teeth of any one who shall ask you the Question.

We are going to have some new Neighbours at *W—d*; they are Sisters in Law to old Mrs. D—T; perhaps, as compleat a Pair of old Maids as *England* can produce. The youngest is past Sixty, and yet the Lungs of of the eldest are so good, that I'll be answerable she shall harangue ten Hours together,
upon

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upon the Subject of Matrimony. She will scarce allow St. PAUL in the Right, when he says, "They that marry do well;" but is thoroughly persuaded of the Truth of his next Assertion, "They which don't marry do better." The youngest is not so fluent with her Tongue, but she, like the Welchman's Owl, *pays it off with thinking*. I fancy we shall be able, in a little Time, to furnish out a considerable Society of old Maids, whereof Mrs. L— (which is the Name of one of the above-mentioned Ladies) shall be Lady-President.

The *Amazonian* Mrs. A— will not own that she envies Mrs. M—; but I have a great Suspicion, that she intends to rival JENNY CAMERON, being equally fond of Wisdom, to which I may add, some Ambition to out-shine her in the Field. She has practised frequently on one or other of the Family this Winter, by which Means it has been my Fate, more than once, to lye in Honour's Truckle-bed. I believe she designs to do great Feats in War this Spring.

I am vastly pleased with the Conversation of your Tenants, and laughed immoderately

4

when

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when I came to JOHN W—R's Witticism. I don't intend to appear in Print, till I am well assured I shall rival Mrs. — (*A. P.*) with her COPE, WADE, &c.

Mr. PITT has resigned his Post in the Army, and recommended one of his Nephews in his Room; not Mr. B—, I believe, for I don't hear that he intends *to boil his Lobster*.—I love a genteel Phrase. Your Brother was here last Week, but I could not prevail with him to sing *Polly Willis*.

That you may not think a Word of yours falls to the Ground, I must tell you that I delivered your Message to Mr. A—; at which, a Mixture of Joy and Gratitude appeared in his Countenance; and being inclined to believe it (and perhaps too complaisant to call in Question my Veracity) did not insist upon my Oath. He told me, he had, before this Time, done himself that Pleasure, had not Illness prevented him; but, if he lives, he intends to see you this next ensuing Summer. I have been under dreadful Apprehensions of his drawing near the Time of his Dissolution, and great Reason I

I

had,

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had, you'll say, when I tell you, that for six Weeks he had not Spirits to squeeze *his dear MOLLY* by the Hand. He has taken great Pains for upwards of thirty Years, to instruct and improve his little Flock ; yet (such is the Perverseness of the People, and the Corruption of their Morals) that after a Sermon of half an Hour long, I fear he had little Reason to believe he had made any great Alteration in their favourite Tenets.

I hope you are convinced, that the Consequence of having a female Correspondent, is to be pestered with Nonsense, and the Return of a very few Letters lets you into the Knowledge of the Materials wherewith a Woman's Mind is furnished. From which of 'em shall we claim Merit?—All I beg is, a favourable Allowance, which will oblige

Your humble Servant,

W. F—.

By the *Birmingham* Post, you may direct for me at *A—n*, near *B—th*, to be left at the *Wheel*. All here desire their Compliments.

L E T-

LETTER VIII.

Lady HERTFORD* (afterwards Duchess of SOMERSET) to the Hon. Mrs. KNIGHT.

Piercy-Lodge, May 16, 1746.

Dear Madam,

I OUGHT, and really intended, to have made Use of the Permission you gave me, to trouble you with a Letter before this Time; but you do not need any Thing to lower your Spirits, and my Letters can hardly have any other Effect upon harder Hearts than yours. When I lost my dear, and by me, ever-lamented Son, † every Faculty to please (if ever I were possessed of any such) died with him. I have no longer any chearful Thoughts to communicate to my Friends; but as the Joy and Pride of my Heart withers in his Grave, my Mind

* For Mr. SHENSTONE's Character of the Letters written by this elegant Correspondent, the Reader is desired to revert to the Preface.

† Lord BEAUCHAMP.

is continually haunting those Mansions of the Dead, and is but too inattentive to what passes in a World, where I have still Duties and Attachments, which I ought to be, and, I hope, I may truly say, I am thankful for. I am sure my Affection for my Lord HERTFORD, and Solicitude for his Welfare, are sincere; since, if I know my own Heart, I would not deliberate a Moment to lay down my Life for his Service. Lady BETTY and Sir HUGH SMITHSON, and their Children, are justly dear to me; and I still feel the Bonds of tender Friendship: but I enjoy all these Blessings with Trembling and Anxiety; for, after my dear BEAUCHAMP, what human Things can appear permanent? Youth, Beauty, Virtue, Health, were not sufficient to save him from the Hand of Death! And who then can think themselves secure? These are the melancholy Considerations, which generally entertain my waking Hours. Tho' sometimes I am able to view the bright Side of my Fate, and ask myself, for whom I grieve? Only for myself? How narrow an Affection does this imply! Could he have lived long as my fondest Wish desired, what could I have asked, at the End of that Term, more, than the Assurance
that

that he should be placed where I humbly hope; and confidently trust, he is, beyond the Reach of Sorrow, Sin, or Sickness? But I must leave a Subject, which, tho' I am never tired of, I ought, in regard to my Friends, to be silent upon, and ask you, where you would have the Collection of Letters sent, which you were so good to subscribe for at my Desire? I have a Letter from Mr. COLLINS this Day, in which he desires to receive your Commands. My Lord, and Mr. COWLAD, charge me with their Compliments to you. I am, with great Truth,

Dear Madam,

Your very affectionate,

and obedient humble Servant,

F. HERTFORD.

L E T.

LETTER IX.

Miss F— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

A—n, Sept. 3, 1746.

I MUST certainly stand in a very bad Light, if, after so many Favours and Obligations conferred on me, I should be so idle, as not to attempt to shew my Gratitude. But how can this be done? Where is the Pen that can describe the Pleasures I have been entertained with? (mine cannot do it—nay, even a THOMSON's would fail here) or where shall those Thanks, or that Praise begin, that ne'er can end?—But hold—He wants no Thanks, he desires no Praise, he follows not Fame, but Fame takes Pride in following him. I shall only say, all that's agreeable is to be found at that elegant Place, *the Leasowes*, where you reign, as Monarch of all, and have only to say to this Man, "Go," and he goeth, to another, "Come," and he cometh, to your Servants, "Do this," and they do it, and that

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with

with a Smile, which shews that Love, as well as Duty, binds 'em to Obedience.

Mrs. A— opens not her Mouth, but in Praise of you and yours. She designs to metamorphose into a Pigeon, and you may expect to find her cooing in VIRGIL'S Grove. Miss K— thanks you for her Picture, and values it as a Drawing of yours; S— drinks Tar-water, and looks fat; and W— could wish you would not stir off your own Domain, till you had finished your Elegies, and that the first Journey then may be to print 'em. Did you but wish it may be so, it would not be in the Power of any Thing to prevent it.

My Brother has sent you the Song, and with it his Compliments. He designed coming to the *Leasowes*, while we were there, but was prevented, and now leaves off all Thoughts of it till Spring. I am going on in my old Way—but am determined to be as short as a *Shrewsbury* Cake, in abruptly telling you that

I am, Sir,

Your much obliged humble Servant,

W. F—.

All

All here desire their Compliments. Excuse every Thing.—Adieu!

LETTER X.

Miss F— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

A—n, Nov. 1, 1746.

I CAN no longer forbear telling you, that you have in your last, obliged me more than by any one Action of your whole Life, and for which I could almost call you Friend; (which, I assure you, is the highest Appellation I can bestow) for I must tell you, that no one yet ever commenced a Friend of mine, till they had corrected me of some Fault, Failing, or Error; and tho' I've long since been taught, that I ought not to make a Friend of any but my own Sex, together with other Particulars parallel to that, yet I cannot but think it a friendly Act, and as such esteem it. For my-

D 2

self,

self, let me say, that I am not so obstinate as to persist in an Error for the Sake of supporting a wrong Judgment; and had I discovered Reason to dispute Superiority with you in any Respect, I should have thought you little worthy of my Correspondence; instead of which, I allow you to excel, much beyond myself, in all Pre-eminence.

Before I proceed any farther, let me clear Mrs. A— from the *Aspersions* her Judgment seems to lie under in this Affair, otherwise I shall appear to be afraid of the Censure it deserves. Know then, 'twas I chose her Shape; and, peradventure, the better to serve my own Purposes; for how know you, but I intended to make a Letter-Carrier of her, (as they do in *Babylon, Aleppo, and the East-Indies*) and by that Means to accommodate myself with a swifter Messenger than the Post? And as I knew her Inclination, when a reasonable Creature, I concluded, after Transmigration, Instinct would then as naturally incline her to frequent VIRGIL'S Grove. How unnatural soever this Shape may appear to the Grove, I must tell you, I could produce some Authorities

ties on my Side, exclusive of those you have mentioned; but I am not about to do this, for, as you seem to disallow it, I readily give it up, and answer, "True, O King!"—Nay, I think to be in the Wrong, and to be reproved in such an ingenious; humane, and polite Manner by you, more than equals being in the Right. I believe too, 'twill be for your Interest, that she remain in her own Shape, for some Time, as her Fingers are employed in knotting Fringe for you, so you find you have no Occasion to buy; 'twill be ready before the Season for wearing it comes.

Marvel not that I don't admit your next Assertion, maugre all the Forces you can raise, nay, tho' the whole nine Muses combined against me, I'll be absolute for once. I am as tenacious of my Prerogatives as any of my Sex, nor do I think I have been guilty of an Infringement in what I have said. I am neither so insensible of Favours as not to discover 'em, nor am I so proud, or so prudish, as not to acknowledge 'em. Surely, you have dealt with none but the last-mentioned Sort of the Sex, that you are so alarmed at what I

have said. But no more of this—I now enter a Caveat to the Subject.

Mr. A— is much pleased with your kind Remembrance of him. He made an excellent *Hare-Chase* Preachment on the *Thanksgiving-Day*; for he told us all the Doublings and Turnings *the Pretender* and his Party made from their first Effort to their Defeat. He has got his Brother with him, a Man, whose Aspect, at one View, discovers to you the Imbecility of his Mind. I do not yet know in what Capacity he is to act, but am a little afraid 'twill prove that of a Servant, which will be similar to P—y's Generosity.

There was a droll Scene the other Day, at *W—d*, between bright B—y, and old Mrs. D—r's Servant, who was sent to ask him to Dinner. The Message delivered, B—y nodded his Head, and replied, "I conno' come." The Servant, not content with this, followed, pulled him by the Sleeve, and intreated him; upon which he responded, "*I conno' come, nor I won-*" "*no' come.*" At this, the Man retreated, much chagrin'd, thinking, no doubt, his Mistress flighted,

sighted, that his own Pocket had lost a *Chance*, and nothing had been befriended—but the Sir-Loin. It was great Glee to the Spectators, and, being *Sunday*, there was a numerous Audience.

You have certainly added Beauty as well as Gentility to the Place, by destroying those Hedges; for I think there can scarce be a Hedge near you, that does not hide a thousand Beauties; and as to the Horse-Pond, it disturbed me greatly when I was there. Has Monsieur *Snuff-Box* sent your Busts, and will your Elegies ever be printed? Lord DUDLEY does us an honour, when he mentions us, and, if drinking his Health is an Equivalent, I assure you we are not behind-hand with his Lordship. I had a Letter from Mr. D—N this Week; he seems as much alarmed as you at my moderate Acknowledgment. Miss F—Y is very glad to hear that you design her a Picture. The enclosed is from Mr. D—IE. Surely, *Gossip* JOAN never prated faster.

I have only to add, that I wish you an untarnished Bliss in the Company of your polished Friend, and that you may enjoy each

40 SELECT LETTERS.

other's Friendship even to the Age of old
NESTOR,

“ Whose Tongue dropp'd Honey ; full of Days
was he ;

“ Two Ages past, he liv'd the Third to see ;

“ And, his first Race of Subjects long decay'd,

“ O'er their Sons' Sons a peaceful Scepter
fway'd.” POPE'S *Homer*.

I have already been too prolix, and 'tis Time
I tell you, that

I am, Sir,

Your obliged humble Servant,

W. F—.

All here desire their Compliments. You say,
you have two Fellows, but I say, you are an
odd Glove. Adieu !

LET-

LETTER XI.*

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to the Rev. Mr. JAGO,
at *Bishop's Itchington*, near *Kineton*, in *War-*
wickshire.

The *Leasowes*, Sept. 17, 1747.

Dear Mr. JAGO,

I THINK I have out-corresponded all my
Correspondents; whether you are the last
that is to be subdued, I cannot say; but the
Rest are so fatigued, that they are not able to
achieve a Line. Apprized of this, and being
by Nature disposed to have Mercy on the Van-
quished,

“ Parcere subiectis, & debellare superbos,”

* In DODSLEY's Collection of Mr. SHENSTONE's Let-
ters, the 47th, addressed to a *Friend*, begins, and con-
tains some Passages, exactly similar to this, but as the
Editor's Copy (Mr. SHENSTONE's own Transcript) spe-
cifies the particular Correspondent, to whom it is ad-
dressed, and contains more Subject, it was judged not
improper to be inserted in this Collection.

I sel-

I seldom write a Syllable more than is requisite to further some Scheme, or ascertain some Interview; the latter being the Purpose of this mine Epistle. I am in great Hopes I shall be at Liberty to see you, ere many Weeks be past, and would beg of you to let me know by a Line, when I am most likely, or when very unlikely, to meet with you at Home. The Reason why I can fix no week, at present, is, that I am in daily Expectations of Mr. LYTTETON, and the HAGLEY Family. I dined there, some Time since, with Mr. PITT, Mr. BOUHOURS, Mr. CAMPION, and all the World. Mr. THOMSON, that right friendly Bard, was expected, and I fancy may be there now. Mr. LYTTETON offered me the Visit, and I own I am pleased with the Prospect of shewing him something at the *Leasowes* beyond his Expectations. I have made a great Improvement in VIRGIL'S Grove, since you were here, and have finished a new Path from it to the House, after the Manner you approved. They are going to build a Rotund to terminate the Visto at *Hagley*; I think there is a little Hill joining the Park, that would suit one better, tho' it will be very pretty where it is.

If

If I come to your House, I won't go to Mr. M—R's. He has been, twice, as near me as the *Grange*, with CHARLES LYTTTELTON, but never deemed my Situation worth seeing. I doubt you are a little too modest in praising it, wherever you go. Why don't you applaud it with both Hands?—

“ *Parcentes ego Dexteras odi—*
 “ *Sparge Rosas*”—

I am so very much enamoured, that is, so very partial to my native Place, that it seems a Miracle to me, how it comes not to be famous. But to be serious—How my Lord DUDLEY is tumbled about the World! He was overturned in going to Town, and now again in coming back. Is not this falling up Stairs and down Stairs?—Nevertheless, he is safe and sound, and able to sit up with you and me till twelve or one at Night, as I know by last *Monday's* Experience.

I have somewhere about a thousand Things to say to you—not now tho'—Mrs. KNIGHT's

Visit I reserve till I see you. A Coach with a Coronet is a pretty Kind of Phænomenon at my Door;—few Things prettier—except the Face of such a Friend as you; for I do not want the Grace to prefer a spirituous and generous Friendship to all the Gewgaws that Ambition can contrive.

I have wrote out my Elegies, and heartily wish you had them to look over, before I come, but I know not how to send them. I shall bring and leave much Poetry with you—“*Thus* “*& Odores!*”—or rather a Covering *Thuri & Odoribus*—

Yet, I pray you,
If you shall e'er my foolish Lines repeat,
Speak of me, as I am—nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in Malice—then
Must you speak
Of one who—

Is, Sir,

Your most affectionate and faithful Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

L E T.

LETTER XII.*

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to the Honourable Mrs.
KNIGHT.

Dear Madam,

The *Leasowes*.

AS it has hitherto seemed good to you to expatiate pretty largely on so diminutive a Subject as a Thimble, I flatter myself that you may read with Patience an Account of the Life and Conversation of your most trifling humble Servant. Otherwise, I should not have told you, that I am extremely unhappy in my present Situation; that, when you left the Country, I had recourse to another Kind of natural Beauties, namely, that which is to be found in "Groves, Meads, and murmuring Streams," and so long as Summer was pleased to continue his Favours, I looked upon your

* This Letter to Mrs. KNIGHT (afterwards Lady LUXBOROUGH) together with several others addressed to the same Correspondent, bearing very indistinct Dates, are placed together in as good Order as Surmise was capable of directing.

Depar-

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Departure as what only changed my Pleasure to Amusement. Now, indeed, Summer has forsaken me likewise; the Trees and Groves are stripped of their Covering, and I am left without any Fence against Spleen, Vapours, Megrim, Discontent, and a numerous Train of such Sort of Beings, which plague me to Death, whenever I offer to recollect your Absence; and how often that happens, I leave any one to guess but yourself, because any one else is better acquainted with the numerous Ways and Means you have of rendering your Company agreeable. I appeal also to the same Persons to guess how provoking you are, when you mention the Possibility there was that I might have seen you at the *Leasowes* some Time ago. What need you tell one of it, since it could not be effected? Why will you put me upon cursing Fortune upon more Accounts than I have already Occasion to do? Pray let me endeavour to conform myself to my real Circumstances, rather than give me a Glimpse of the Pleasure which you was about to do me, and yet had not the Goodness to go through with. I want no Inducements to come to *Worcester*, since I discovered that you lived there, and

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and that being all that was necessary, tho' you have mentioned others that are attractive.

I beg you would make my Compliments agreeable to Mrs. WINSMORE, which you are best capable of doing, for two Reasons; first, because you know the Sincerity of my Esteem, and, secondly, because I have no Idea how any Thing you say can be disagreeable. The Consideration that she remembers me, and that she spoke of me in the same Breath with Mrs. KNIGHT (as my Vanity interprets your Letter) makes me so vain, that I, with the utmost Assurance, take the Liberty of subscribing myself,

Madam,

Your most obedient, humble Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

P. S. I believe I shall go to *L—n* the End of next Week. If I were to receive a Letter from you, as I put my Foot into the Stirup, I should bid Mrs. ARNOLD take in her Bottle,
for

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for I had no Occasion for a Cordial. Your
Affair (*où vous sçavez*) diverts me highly.

L E T T E R XIII.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to the Honourable
Mrs. KNIGHT.

NANDO's Coffee-House, near
Madam, *Temple-Bar, May.*

A LADY, whose Conversation is ever discovering somewhat new and agreeable, may possibly find some Amusement in a Subject that is new, tho' with no other Recommendation. 'Tis upon this Account, that I beg your Acceptance of this grotesque Poem.

I took great Pleasure in seeing the *piping Faunus* at RACKSTROW's, because, as it is certainly a genteel Design, it must needs prove agreeable to Mrs. KNIGHT. Connoisseurs would chuse to have *his* musical Intention expressed,

as

as it is, at present, by the Posture merely; if the Pipe was added, it would prove more obviously agreeable. If I might presume to advise, it should be, to calculate it, in some Degree, for Tastes less refined than your own; because there are Millions of the former Species to, perhaps, one or two of the latter, and I know you take a superior Pleasure in the Satisfaction of others.

“Trifles light as Air,” or as the Poem I am sending, acquire a fresh Weight with me, as often as they give me an Occasion of assuring you that

I am,

Madam,

Your most obliged,
and obedient humble Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER XIV.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lady
LUXBOROUGH, at *Barrels*.

Madam,

I WAS much concerned to hear by Mr. WILLIAMS's Account, last *Thursday*, that your Ladyship has been greatly indisposed. The Particulars of your Disorder he does not mention, but tells me, he was desired to give it as a Reason that I did not hear from you before. It is as natural for me to make Enquiry concerning the Recovery of your Health, as it is for me to wish it, which I very earnestly do; I have, therefore, sent an honest Neighbour of mine upon this Errand, who will be glad of an Opportunity of seeing *Barrels*. Poor Tom, my trusty Servant, has, ever since I came from *Barrels*, been in a very dangerous way; and whether he ever may regain the small Share of Health he has been used to, is a great Question, else I had sent something sooner.

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fooner. But I must request your Ladyship not to write, if you find it the least troublesome. A verbal Message will be very sufficient, till such Time as you can write me a full Account of your Recovery.

I have no Particulars that can tempt me to enlarge this Letter, and, indeed, I hardly wish for any, lest I should accidentally let fall any Thing, that might tempt you, at this Time, to write an Answer; which, tho' so highly agreeable to me at a more favourable Season, can afford me little Satisfaction, when I conjecture that you write in Pain.

I hope Mr. HALL is recovered by this Time. As my rural Scenery could not attract him hither in Summer, I have little Hopes that my Conversation can have that Effect in Winter. Few Persons care to ride twelve dirty Miles in Winter, be their Charity ever so great,

“ To see the dullest of the Sons of Men,”

for such am I, without any Affectation, during the Winter-Season; altogether absorbed

in what I think they call *Swiss-Meditation*, that is, *thinking upon Nothing*. A very unjoyous Circumstance this, for such of my Friends as vouchsafe to read my Letters.—But I digress—I pray for your Ladyship's Health and Happiness, hoping my Messenger may bring me an Account of both, agreeable to the Wishes of

Your Ladyship's

most obliged and obedient Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

'Tis now *Ox.* 18th—but this Letter was wrote, in order to have been sent last Week. I sat up late with Lord DUDLEY one Night this Week. He often proposes your Ladyship's Health, and drinks it very respectfully.

The Inhabitants of our Parish have presented our Parson at the Visitation; on which Occasion, I have given myself the generous Air of observing a strict Neutrality—in other Words, I am a Person unconcerned.

L E T-

LETTER XV.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Madam,

March 15, 1747-8.

AFTER having owned, that the Fear your Ladyship has been under, is in reality to be imputed to me, I am at a Loss for Words to express my Concern, or to alleviate my Fault. I will not, however, disallow that the Book came to Hand much sooner than I could reasonably expect it, and that the Letter enclosed in it, gave me that uncommon Pleasure, which your Ladyship's never fail to do. I have nothing to say in my Behalf, but that I have never had Health or Spirits since I received it, that might encourage me to think I could return an Answer as I ought; and even to-night my Spirits are so bad, and my Head so confused, that I have no Reason to hope *these few Lines* can do any Thing more, than free you from your present Uncertainty. But if I am honoured with a Line from your

E 3

Lady-

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Ladyship hereafter, I will immediately acknowledge it as well as I am able, let my Capacity be what it will.

I do not know how far your Ladyship's Name may be distinguishable by a *Post-Woman's* Ear; but this I know, that if I had been Parson H—κ, your Ladyship should not have known from me, that there was any Woman in the World, who could express herself concerning you with the Indecency you mention. I am astonished at her Behaviour, and not a little at her Forgetfulness. There seems to me to be no surer Conveyance in the World than that of the Farmer, by whom I sent my Letter to the Post-Office at *Henley*, and by whom, I suppose, you conveyed your Parcel. However, in Obedience to your Ladyship's Commands, I have sent this Letter to Master H—κ, and shall have an additional Pressure on my Spirits, till I hear you have been pleased to forgive my Neglect. I know extremely well, that Want of Time and Leisure, and some other Excuses, which are often made for not writing, can be of Weight from *no one* but a Cobler, who has ten or a dozen Children dependent on a *Tatch-*
ing.

ing-End; but I know as well, that your Ladyship's is no ordinary Correspondence, and that a Person ought to have a clear Head, and an unembarrassed Chearfulness of Temper, when he sits down to answer any Letter of yours. For my Part, I hardly look upon this as any Letter *at all*, and will infallibly write again, as soon as I can recover my natural State of Mind. I have *as little* Reason to consider the enclosed *as Poetry*; but as they were *short* Compositions, I had been writing them out yesterday, with a Design to send them to the Post-Office to-night.

I am afraid I have tired your Ladyship with Madrigal and Sonnet. I hope, when the Weather gets finer (with which my Spirits uniformly sympathize) to vary my Stile a little for your Ladyship's Amusement; in the mean Time, I have sent you a Poem, written by a Gentleman of my Acquaintance, and shewn up, for a College-Exercise, in Print. Your Ladyship will soon discover a juvenile Want of Judgment in several Places; but I trust that the Elegance of his Fancy you will admire. He sometimes comes and and stays

E 4

a Month

a Month with me at the *Leasowes*, in the Summer; the next Time he does so, I will be obliged to your Ladyship for Leave to introduce him at *Barrels*. I am mistaken, if he will not be pleased almost to a Degree of Enthusiasm.

As to your Ladyship's Lameness, tho' it comes last in this irregular Letter, I beg Leave to assure you, that it gave me a sincere Concern to hear that it was bad, and a very sensible Pleasure to hear it was abated. I as heartily wish your Ladyship's Health and Happiness as you do yourself; and as I solemnly assure you, that such is always the Disposition of my Mind, I *will* hope to be forgiven, if I should, through Ignorance, fall short in my Means of expressing it. This last Neglect is what I shall scarce again be guilty of, and can only be excused by your Ladyship's Candour.

I am, Madam,

Your most obliged,

and most obedient Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

If

If your Ladyship wants the Book, I will send it directly; otherwise, I will beg Leave to keep it a Week or two longer.

LETTER XVI.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to the Right Hon.
Lady LUXBOROUGH, at *Barrels*.

I HAVE sent your Ladyship a Book of Gardening, which I borrowed, about five Years ago, of a Neighbour. If it will be of any Service to you, in modelling the crooked Walks in your Shrubbery, I shall be glad; and you may return it at your Leisure, as *I* do. It is written by a poor illiterate Fellow, notwithstanding its Dedication to His Majesty, *who is delighted with Enquiries into vegetable Nature*. You will see something of his Ignorance, perhaps, in every Page; more especially Page 204, first Part, where he talks of MINERVA
and

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and PALLAS for Statues, with many Blunders of like Nature. It was written, seemingly, when the present *natural* Taste began to dawn, and which I wish, rather than hope, may last as long as Nature.

Mr. L—N, you may perhaps hear, has been offered, and has refused the Place of Treasurer of the Navy, in Mr. D—N's Room.—What a Tide of Success!

May your Ladyship be as happy as Success ever made any Body! and that it is more in the Mind than Externals is to me a Demonstration. I'm sure I shall never be so happy, with all my Philosophy and *Success*, as an old Fellow who works for me: but I think your Ladyship has not only a right and philosophical Understanding, but good animal Spirits, which are half in half; so that you may be much happier than even *him*, which, I assure you, is to be greatly so.

I am now a little maudlin after Dinner, and if my Groups are inconsistent and queer, you must excuse me. I hope Mr. ALLEN is, by
this

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this Time, well. I have written a Line to Mr. OUTING, at the Head of his Regiment. I am now to take my formal Leave, as I do after a long Visit; that is, with about half a Bow, and the Expression of about half I think; but I include as much as any Body, when I say,

I am

Your Ladyship's

Most obliged, and most devoted Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

If your Ladyship could spare me about three Eggs of your *Guinea* Fowl, I should be much obliged.

L E T-

LETTER XVII.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Madam,

I AM quite ashamed that I have not been able to make a speedier Enquiry into the Event of your Ladyship's Journey. It would give me the utmost Uneasiness to find that you underwent any Inconvenience from a Visit which gave me so much Pleasure and yourself so little.

I am somewhat apprehensive, that one ought to guard against Ambition, and even too much Admiration, if one would prepare to live as befits a pious Hermit to do. Your Ladyship will discover, therefore, how dangerous a Visitant you are, and how much you must have retarded my Progress tow'ards an eremitical Temper of Mind; having diffused an Air of Dignity thro' my solitary Paths, which will not fail to present itself as oft as I resume them. Perhaps, Politeness, Elegance, and Taste, may be
I
some

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some of those privileged Accomplishments, which it may be allowable for a Recluse to admire, under certain Limitations. If not, I can only say, that I must remain a very imperfect Hermit, till I am able to forget the Honour you have done me; and if I am not likely to succeed that Way, I may as well indulge my Ambition to the full, which I never fail to do, as oft as I am permitted to subscribe myself

Your Ladyship's

Most obliged, and most
obedient humble Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

I propose to wait on your Ladyship at *Barrels* very soon; in the mean Time, if you would please to lend me Mr. MALLET's and Mr. WHITEHEAD's Poems, I will take all imaginable Care of them.

L E T.

LETTER XVIII.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Dear Madam,

The *Leasowes*.

THO' I think it is a Sort of Maxim, that a Person in *London* seldom *complains* he is forgotten by his Friends in the Country, yet I cannot, by any Means, prevail upon my Conscience to acquit me of a Sort of disrespectful Silence, since your Ladyship went to Town. It was not either the Politics or the Amusements of our great Metropolis, that could make the Letters of your Friends appear impertinent, or even indifferent to you ; and tho' the sublime Entertainment you must receive from the Conversation of so great a Man as Lord BOLINGBROKE, might bid the fairest to do so, yet was I not without Conviction, that your Ladyship would feel some sort of Complacency upon the Sight of a Scrip of Paper, which should acquaint you that I was alive.

Alive

Alive, indeed, I am ; at least, if it may be called so, to exist among a Set of People, whose Employments, Passions, and Sentiments, are entirely foreign to my own ; and where I see, and hear, and do nothing, but what I think may as well be left unseen, unheard, and undone. What can your Ladyship expect from a Correspondent so situated, beside pure Respect and Friendship, and many artless Assurances of their Reality and Continuance ?

Mr. O— stayed pretty near a Week with me. He has, I think, strict Honour, Good-nature, and good Sense. What he wants, in my Eye, is a little genuine *Taste* ; for tho' good Sense may, by Degrees, enable a Person to discover the Beauties of Nature or Art, yet it can never furnish him with any extraordinary Relish or Enjoyment of them, which is the Effect of innate *Taste* alone, and which differs as widely from the former, as the Palate differs from the Brain. Your Ladyship has, I dare say, frequently made the same observation.

You

You will hear Sir THOMAS LYTTLETON, notwithstanding he complained always of his *Head*, died of a *Polypus* in the *great Artery*; which, I do not find, was ever, in the least, suspected by his Physicians; but which, if it had been ever so apparent, they could not possibly have cured. You will imagine that his Death must have thrown a Sort of Gloom round the Villages in his Neighbourhood. A numerous and fashionable Family animates a Country-Place to an inconceivable Degree. The Family at *Hagley* will be immediately dispersed. Miss LYTTLETON goes to Lady LITCHFIELD's, to the *Colonel's*, to *London*, and does not think to settle. Miss WEST goes first to *Stow*, and then intends to reside with her Brother the *Commodore*. Sir GEORGE and his Lady set out for *London* to-morrow, and as they propose to build, next Spring, upon the *old Foundation*, it may be many Years ere they come to reside amongst us, even for a small Part of the Summer.

Lord DUDLEY and I dined together at *Hagley* last *Wednesday*, where we found Lord AN-
SON'S

SON's Brother, and some other Company. Mr. MILLER unluckily asked me at Table, how I liked the new Situation of their Column; which threw me under a Necessity of offending either against the Rules of Politeness, or (what it more sacred with me) the Laws of Sincerity. The Truth is, I do not like it upon many Accounts; and I am persuaded, before many Years are past, they will be of the same Mind. But least of all, do I approve their Intentions of building three new Fronts, and altering every Room by a gothic Model, and that with an Eye to Frugality, at the same Time that they have not an Inch of Gothicism about the House, to warp their Imagination that Way. But this Subject never fails to lead me too far; nor can I explain myself to the full, unless I could shew your Ladyship their Plan. The fine Situation they have, within an hundred Yards, they neglect;—in short, as it appears to me, they are going to sacrifice an Opportunity of rendering their Place compleat, for the Sake of an imperfect, but expensive Specimen of gothic Architecture; which, not having its Foundation either in Truth or Proportion, will fall into

Disgrace again in the Course of a few Years—
 Can one then forbear crying out, “The Graces
 “droop”—“Am I in *Greece* or in *Gothland*?”
 But as their Resolution seems fixed, I mention
 this in Confidence, and must, for the future,
 lay my Finger on my Mouth.

Mr. S— has so mangled and disfigured my
Grove, that I dare not send it to your Lady-
 ship, till he has altered the Plate, so as to
 render it less intolerable. FLUELLIN, as I
 remember, in SHAKESPEARE,* speaking of the
 near Resemblance betwixt *Macedon* and *Mon-*
mouth, observes, “There is a River in *Mace-*
don, there is a River also in *Monmouth*—pe-
 “radventure, there be Fish in both.—Would
 “you desire better Similitude?”. S— being
 a modest Man, has seemed to content himself
 with some such Degree of Resemblance: but I
 wish him well, and will cause him, one Day,
 to do the Place Justice, for his own Sake as
 well as mine—for his own, as his Piece will
 be seen by many who know the Place, and for

* Historical Play of King HENRY V.

mine,

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mine, as the Place is known to afford the best Scene I have.

I am, &c.

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER XIX.

The Countess of HERTFORD to Lady
LUXBOROUGH.

Piercy-Lodge, May 15, 1748.

Dear Madam,

HOW long soever your Letters are in coming, they never fail to assure their Welcome, by being more agreeable and entertaining, as well as breathing more of Friendship, than any Body's *else* have the Art of doing. I have been here about a Month, and find some little Improvements, which were ordered when we went to *London*, compleated;

F 2

and

and I think they are not quite unworthy of the Name. A Piece of waste Ground, on the lower Side of the Abbey-Walk, has been turned into a Corn-Field, and a Turf-Walk, about eight Feet wide, round it; close to a flourishing Hawthorn Hedge; on one Side, there is a thatched Seat open on three Sides, which pretends to no Name of greater Dignity, than justly belongs to what it represents, namely a Shepherd's Hut; before it there is an irregular Piece of Turf, which was spared for the Sake of some old Oaks and Beeches, which are scattered upon it; and as you are sitting down there, you have, under these Boughs, a direct View of *Windsor* Castle. There are Sweet-Williams, Narcissus's, Rose-Campions, and such Flowers as the Hares will not eat, in little Borders, round the Foot of every Tree; and I almost flatter myself, that you would not be displeased with the rural Appearance of the whole. The Rains have given us the strongest Verdure I ever saw: our Lawns and Meadows are enamelled with a Profusion of Daisies and Cowslips, and we have the greatest Appearance of Fruit that has been seen these many Years. I conclude you will read Mr.

THOM-

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THOMSON'S *Castle of Indolence*: 'tis after the Manner of SPENCER, but I think he does not always keep so close to his Stile, as the *Author of the School-Mistress*, whose Name I never knew, till you were so good as to inform me of it. I think it a charming Poem; and was very much pleased with his Ballad of *Queen ELIZABETH's* seeing the Milk-Maid. She appears, at least in my humble Imagination, in a more natural Light, than when we hear of her bullying foreign Powers, and cutting off the Head of an unhappy Queen, who fled to her for Protection. But to return to *the Castle of Indolence*; I believe it will afford you much Entertainment; there are many pretty Paintings in it, but I think the *Wizard's Song* deserves a Preference.—“He needs no Muse “who dictates from his Heart.” Have you met with two little Volumes, which contain four Contemplations, written by a Mr. JAMES HERVEY, a young *Cornish* or *Devonshire* Clergyman? The Subjects are upon walking among the Tombs, upon a Flower Garden, upon Night, and upon the starry Heavens. There is something poetical and truly pious. Now I have got into the Impertinence of recommen-

ding Books to one who is a much better Judge than myself, I must name an *Essay on Delicacy*,* a Subject which, if I were not acquainted with

* The *Essay on Delicacy*, here mentioned, was the Production of Dr. NATHANIEL LANCASTER, many Years Rector of *Stanford Rivers*, near *Ongar*, in *Essex*, Uncle to the Editor of these Letters. He was a Man of strong natural Parts, great Erudition, refined Taste, and master of a nervous, and at the same Time, elegant Stile, as is very obvious to every one who has had the Happiness to read the *Essay* here spoken of. His Writings were fewer in Number than their Author's Genius seemed to promise to his Friends, and his Publications less known than their intrinsic Excellence deserved. Had he been as solicitous, as he was capable, to instruct and please the World, few Prose-Writers would have surpassed him; but in his later Years, he lived a Recluse, and whatever he composed in the Hours of retired Leisure, he (unhappily for the Public) ordered to be burned, which was religiously (I had almost said irreligiously) performed.

He was a Native of *Cheshire*, and, in his earlier Years, under the Patronage and Friendship of the late Earl of CHOLMONDELEY, mixed in all the more exalted Scenes of polished Life, where his lively Spirit, and brilliant Conversation, rendered him universally distinguished and esteemed; and even, till within a few Months of his Decease, (near seventy-five Years of Age) these Faculties could scarce be said to be impaired.

The *Essay on Delicacy*, (of which we are now speaking) the only material Work of his, which the Editor knows to have survived him, was first printed in the Year 1748, and has been very judiciously and meritoriously preserved by the late Mr. DODSLEY, in his *Fugitive Pieces*, published in two Volumes.

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you, and one or two more, I should imagine had no longer an Existence upon our Globe.

I sincerely sympathize in the Pleasure which you must feel, Dear Madam, from the extreme good Character which every Body gives of your Son, and which his Behaviour to you proves he deserves. May this, with every other Blessing, be long continued to you, and may you always look upon me as a sincere, tho' insignificant Friend, as well as a

Most faithful and obedient

Humble Servant,

F. HERTFORD.

My Lord is at present in *London*, but I hope he will be here Time enough to save the Postage of this Letter. I should be very glad to see any Thing of Mr. SHENSTONE's.

LETTER XX.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to the Rev. Mr. GRAVES,
at *Whitchurch, near Reading, Berks.*

The Leasowes, June, 1748.

Dear Mr. GRAVES,

I FIND a very strong Impulse, prompting me to write to you this Evening. I don't know whether I ever let you into the Secret, that I receive an inward Satisfaction at the Time that I am sending you a Letter, and that this Action partakes of the Nature of all virtuous ones, in being its own Reward. However we are taught to hope for *other* and more *ample* Rewards attending Virtue, as I am inclined to expect a more considerable Pleasure, when I receive your Answer. My Soul now leans entirely on the Friendship of a few private Acquaintance, and if they drop me, I shall be a wretched Misanthrope. Is it a great Fatigue to you to sit down some vacant Half-Hour, and scribble me a few Lines, relating to the State of your Mind,
and

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and your Affairs?—DICK JAGO, who called accidentally at a Public-house, at *Mickleton*, told me, they heard — — — ; mentioning, at the same Time, his thorough Conviction, that, *whatever* might prove the Event of this Affair, as *you* were a Principal, it would be as it *ought*. Mr. SMITH, (the Designer) who knew you too, was here at the same Time, and many civil Things, very agreeable to me, were said in your Behalf; “ *Immo, Omnes omnia bona dix-*
ere.” As to — — — — — — — — — —
 — — — — — — — — — —
 — — — — — — — — — —
 — — — — — — — — — —

I thank you for your little Strictures on the *School-Mistress*. I have sacrificed my Partiality to your unbiassed Judgment; *Multa gemens*, have I sacrificed it. The Truth is, I am not quite convinced (tho’ I have acted as if I were) that one should give up any Part, that appears droll in itself, and makes the Poem, on the whole, more agreeable, for the Sake of rendering it a more perfect Imitation of SPENCER. But when you have more Leisure, and I collect my
 Pieces

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Pieces, I don't despair of furnishing a more compleat Edition yet.

Mr. SMITH (whom I mentioned just now) has taken two Views of *Hagley-Park*, which, with two from other Places, compleat a Set; the Subscription-Price, half a Guinea; but he takes other little Views of the cloſer Scenes, and of particular Beauties, which will form a Drawing-Book, and which I ſhall like beyond thoſe I have ſubſcribed for. Would you not be ſurprized to ſee a Draught of my VIRGIL'S *Grove* inſerted among the latter?—He took one, and promiſed to have it engraved, and inſerted ſomewhere; but I had rather he ſhould ſtay a Week, and take about four Views, and that you were here, and would give him ſome Inſtructions, and it ſhould make a little Drawing-Book to ſell for a Shilling. But, “Ah, me!—“ I fondly dream”—The Days of Fancy and dear Enthuſiaſm will never more return! Such as thoſe that flew over our Heads when you were *here*, and at *Harborough*, on your firſt Viſit; when the *merum Rus* of the *Leaſowes* could furniſh you with pleaſanter Ideas, than the nobleſt Scenes that ever Painter copied.

I am

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I am impatient to see you, and resolve to do so when I *can*; and I beg you will *project* some Means of coming to the *Leasowes* without Inconvenience to yourself.

I am,

Your truly affectionate

W. SHENSTONE.

I beg my Compliments to Mr. WHISTLER. I don't know whether I am more *ashamed* or *vexed*, that I cannot set out—to-morrow—for *Whitchurch*; but my Mind will not be easy till I have seen both him and you.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

The *Leasowes*,
Sunday, July 25, 1748.

Madam,

WHEN I received your Ladyship's Letter on *Friday*, I was just upon the Point of setting out for *Broom*; I therefore declined answering it, till I had spoke with Miss DOLMAN. It is now with the greatest Thankfulness for your obliging Invitation, and the most pleasing Idea of the Visit we propose, that I am to inform your Ladyship, we intend waiting on you upon *Tuesday* or *Wednesday* seven-night. If you should have *much* Company at that Time, or the Visit should be otherwise unseasonable, your Ladyship will be so good as to let us know; if not, I will not fail to shew Miss DOLMAN the Way to the most agreeable Entertainment, and the most engaging Conversation, I have met with any where. Your Ladyship will not imagine that I understand

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stand *Entertainment* in the vulgar Sense; (tho' what I say is true enough in *that*) my chief Pleasures, I flatter myself, are Pleasures of the *Mind*; and I can say, with great Truth, that my Mind was never more *disposed* to be pleased any where *else*, or found equal Opportunities to gratify that Disposition.

Miss DOLMAN, tho' she has not seen much of the World, has done great Things, or, in other Words, has made good Use of the Opportunities she *has* had, if she can deserve any Part of that favourable Mention you make of her. All I know is, that she has *Taste* enough to put the Pleasure I have promised her at *Barrels* out of all Dispute.

I now proceed to other Things. I have sent your Ladyship the *first Number* of *Sickness*, a Poem, which is all I have. I *send* it as indeed I *offered* it, because it bears some Relation to Lady HERTFORD, on Account of the Panegyrick of Lord BEAUCHAMP, which I believe is just.

I have,

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I have of late read the Life of Colonel GARDINER, being induced to do so by a Vision, which is described there, and which I hear Mr. LYTTELTON countenances. I will give your Ladyship my Opinion of the Story, when I come to *Barrels*.

Pray don't buy the Books *I* talked of; you will hardly read them twice; and I can lend you HERVEY's *Meditations*, the *Life of Colonel GARDINER*, and, in a short Time, *Memoirs of Mrs. PILKINGTON*, either of my own, or my Brother's. I beseech your Ladyship, that I may have leave to save you six Shillings, and three Shillings, and three Shillings; that is, according to the old Maxim, (*viz.* a *Penny sav'd, &c.*) put into the Power of my Gratitude, to be of about twelve Shillings significance. By so doing, I shall not only talk, but proceed to one *ouvert Act* in the Cause of Economy.—I wish it be not the only one.

In regard to Mr. OUTING, I will only say, that I please myself with the full Assurance of meeting him at *Barrels*. It is out of my Power this Day to send you an *amusing* Letter, whether

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whether it be so at other Times or not. There is not a single Cloud or Dimness in the Sky, but has its exact Image or Counterpart in my Imagination; but one's Sincerity does not suffer by Weather, tho' one's Vivacity may; and it is with the greatest Truth that I shall always remain

Your Ladyship's

Most obliged, and most obedient Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER XXII.

Miss DOLMAN to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

Broom, Nov. 8, 1748.

I AM under two Obligations to you for the genteel Present you have made me; one, for the Pleasure I have received, and shall receive from the neat and valuable Letter-Case, which

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which is Part of it; and the other, for the Honour of your Letter. This Acknowledgment is all the Return I am able to make you for them, at this Time; but *Fortune* will, I hope, give me some future Opportunity of freeing myself; as soon as she does, I shall certainly take it, if I have your Consent so to do; but the latter I despair of ever discharging, as I can never do it till *Apollo* is pleased to favour me in such a Manner as he does you. I am desiring you to accept of my Brother's Compliments, and to give both his and mine to your Brother.

Your much obliged

and affectionate Servant,

M. DOLMAN.

L E T-

LETTER XXIII.

Countess of HERTFORD to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Percy Lodge, Nov. 20, 1748.

Dear Madam,

I Remember Mrs. HIGGONS used to say, Lady CLARENDON had such a Power over her Understanding, that she might persuade her she was a Fish. You have pretty near the same Ascendant over mine, yet cannot quite convince me, that eight Months is not an immoderate while to keep Silence, and make a Chasm in a Correspondence with a Friend, who incessantly wishes to hear of your Health and Happiness. I am not more easily seduced into an assent to your Apology; for though I admire the beautiful Language in which the Fiction of your Dullness is painted, I cannot mistake it for a Truth. I am so bad at Invention, that I will not search for an ingenious Fable, to excuse myself for troubling you with an Answer so soon, though my Readiness to obey

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your

your Commands, in subscribing for the Prints you mention (if you will let me know where I must send for a Receipt) might furnish me with one: but honestly own, that as my Lord has been in *London* since *Thursday*, I did not know how to employ the leisure Hours his Absence afforded me, more to my Satisfaction.

We returned hither from *Bath* only *Friday* the Eleventh: we were there two Months, the last Fortnight of which we were detained, after all our Things were gone, by my poor Lord's having a Fit of the Gout; and I believe we came away rather too soon after it, for his Limbs had not recovered their Strength, so that he was terribly fatigued; however, he has now recovered it, and is certainly upon the whole infinitely the better, for having drank the *Bath* Waters. If I could envy you, dear Madam, I should be tempted to do it, for being in Reach of *Hagley*, for having Mr. WEST for a Neighbour, and Mr. SHENSTONE for a Friend. He has obliged me so much, in letting me see his charming Ode upon Autumn, and the Honour he does Mr. THOMSON's Memory in that Poem, and in his Design to erect an Urn
for

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for him in VIRGIL's *Grove*, that I am sorry I cannot agree with him, in his Dislike to *Autumn*. On the contrary, I draw one Motive of my Partiality to it, from a similar Cause to what he partly ascribes his Aversion: he hates it as a Season which deprived him of a Friend; I love it, because the latest Days my Heart could boast of Happiness, in the best and most beloved of Sons, were in that Time of the Year, till (as Dr. YOUNG says)

—At *Death's* Toll, whose restless, iron Tongue
Calls daily for his Millions at a Meal,
Starting I woke, and found myself undone.

And then,

The Clouds, the Winds, the Rains, the falling
Leaves,
The naked Branches, the poor shivering Birds—

Every Thing around me seemed to sympathize
in my Distress, and still at every melancholy
Anniversary of my ever-to-be-lamented Loss,
put on the same friendly Appearance of social
Sorrow; and I may say with MYRA, in her

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Poem, before Mr. THOMSON's first Edition
of the Seasons,

To thee, my gently-drooping Head I bend,
Thy Sigh my Sister, and thy Tear my Friend.

Forgive me, dear Madam, for thus continually returning to this afflicting Subject: but two Lines of Mr. POPE's, with the Alteration only of one Word, must plead my excuse,

Of all Affliction taught a *Sufferer* yet,
'Tis sure the hardest Science to forget.

I have done—and will now tell you, that our being obliged to go to *Bath*, has hindered us from undertaking any Thing here, so that I have nothing to talk of that is new, and I am afraid there was Nothing here before, that would make a tolerable Figure, either in a Print or a Drawing; a Flat can hardly look well upon Paper, though in reality, the Variety of Woods and Lawns, Water, Grass, and Gravel, may produce a Contrast not unpleasing to the Eye. I am sorry you find any Defects in Mr. HERVEY; for both the Design and Manner of his Writing pleases me extremely.

I want

I want to know what you think of the *Peruvian Letters*, and especially of the Fifth in the Suite. I have been very well entertained lately with the two first Volumes of the *Foundling*,* written by Mr. FIELDING, but not to be published till the 22d of *January*; if the same Spirit runs through the whole Work, I think it it will be much preferable to JOSEPH ANDREWS. My Lord is absent from *London*, but I hope will be here Time enough to free this Letter, for I'm sure it is not worth the Postage.

I am,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful and devoted

F. HERTFORD.

* The History of TEM JONES, by HENRY FIELDING, Esq.

LETTER XXIV.

Miss DOLMAN to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

Broom, Jan. 23, 1749.

IN the first Place, I return you Thanks for your very polite Letter, which, I do assure you, I was proud of receiving, and should have troubled you with an Answer the same Day, could I write with as little Difficulty as you.

I admire the Countess's Letter, and especially that Part about her Son. She seems sensible of her great Loss still. She talks of VIRGIL's *Grove*, as if she had seen it. I am sure, if she had, she would have been highly delighted with the Beauties of that Place. I want Summer to come, that I may see the Urn, which you intend to erect to THOMSON's Memory, and VIRGIL's *Grove* in Perfection.

With Carelessness and Inattention, I have read Mrs. PILKINGTON's second Volume; she
is

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is still more entertaining; I think she expresses herself well; I fancy too her Poetry to be good; and I dare say, she will think it hard not to be allowed the Liberty of her Tongue and Pen.—But I ought to be ashamed of giving my Opinion, with so much Freedom, to one who is so good a Judge of Writing as you are.

My *Litchfield* Journey afforded me but slender Amusement; less even than I expected. Mrs. DOLMAN had two Visitants, Mrs. WHITBY and her Daughter, who came from the same Town where Lord ANSON lives. They talked much in Praise of his Lordship, and seemed to be intimate Acquaintance of his.

Miss FLETCHER's severe Letter has never been answered yet: I hope, Sir, that will excuse for the Shortness of this, because I must instantly set about writing one to her. Pray excuse this Nonsense, with all its Faults, which are very numerous.

I am, yours,

M. DOLMAN.

G 4

L E T.

LETTER XXV.

MISS DOLMAN TO W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Broom, March 26, 1749.

SO, you are determined, Sir, to be silent, till I have wrote again!—An effectual Method, indeed, to make me; for I should be very imprudent, did I not procure myself your inimitable Letters every Opportunity I had, which are sure to please, amuse, and instruct at the same Time. But I have really so great Contempt for my own, that, when I have finished a Letter, I can scarcely persuade myself to send it, were I not inclined to believe, you are more my Friend, than to make any Use of it to my Disadvantage.

Last Week I received an Epistle from Miss FANNY FLETCHER. All she says in Relation to Lady LUXBOROUGH is as follows: “ Pray
“ don’t think what I said of Lord LUXBO-
“ ROUGH proceeded either from Envy or Jealousy.

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“ lousy. I assure you, it did not. I am nei-
 “ ther so stupid, nor so unreasonable, to desire
 “ you to like me only, and hope I am far
 “ from speaking ill of any Persons, because
 “ they have Accomplishments.

“ Mrs. D—T, of *Worfield*, is dead. Her Son
 “ is gone to *Oxford*, to qualify himself for a
 “ Living of £.600 a Year, which his Aunt
 “ S—N has given him, together with an Estate
 “ of £.100. The Living is held in Trust by
 “ one Mr. W—RE.”

This is all she informs me of, that I think
 worth relating to you, only that she has your
 Eclogues very safe, and has kept them, she
 says, seven Months longer than you gave her
 Leave, yet hopes, and trusts, you will forgive
 to *seventy Times seven*.

If you only mentioned the Ruffles to me, as
 a Hint that you wanted a Pair of that Sort,
 I am mighty glad I have taken it so. I have
 sent the enclosed, to know whether the Flowers
 are filled up in the Manner you would have
 ’em; if not, please to communicate to me,
 some

some way or other, how you mean, and then I will persevere in my Work with infinite Pleasure.

This Summer I shall also begin my Brother a Fire-Screen, if he can contrive the Pattern of it. I wish I may be so fortunate, to please you both in the Performances which I have undertaken, and then I shall be sure my Time has not been spent in vain: but if the contrary should happen, I will immediately go in Search of the great Mr. Æsop, and intreat a Cup of the Waters of Forgetfulness. Adieu!—I would add more Nonsense to what I have already wrote, did not your Servant wait.

I am, with great Sincerity,

Yours,

M. DOLMAN.

LET-

LETTER XXVI.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Madam, The *Leasowes*, June 2, 1749.

THOTHO' I may seem to have been extremely idle, I have really taken no small Pains in endeavouring to obey your Ladyship's Commands. I wish, when you peruse my Pacquet, you may not rather think me too officious; tho' I should imagine even that a Crime by no Means equal to Negligence, in any Affair, wherein you are pleased to employ me. How far I have erred in that Respect, I am utterly unable to judge, as your Ladyship's Directions were not very *explicit*, and as I have not been favoured with a single Syllable from Mr. H—LL, to inform me *whether*, or *how far* he approved of *any* Alterations. But what Harm do I commit? I do not call them *Alterations*, which I send; they are only a small Cargo of different Expressions, which I sincerely desire you will apply or *reject*, entirely as you think proper;

proper; nor shall it give me the least Offence if you reject the whole, if so be you please to acquit me of Presumption. To speak my *present* Thoughts, I think the Epitaph on Mr. H—LL's Father, and, indeed, all Epitaphs, should be short. What I have chiefly aimed at in Number I. and Number II. is to express his *general* Character in few Words. Nevertheless, if Mr. H—LL chuses to have a more *particular* Account of his Father, I should think he had better let *ARIS take off about half a Score Copies (on a single Sheet) of that which your Ladyship has sketched out; after you have made what Improvements and Additions you shall think advisable; I mean to give them away amongst a few Friends or Relations. I am not languid, in my Wishes to advance the Character to as high a Pitch, as Mr. H—LL can desire, for I believe his Father might deserve as good an one, as any Person in a public Station. But you remember these Lines of Mr. POPE—according to the Way of the World,

'Tis from high Life, high Characters are drawn;
A Saint in Crape is twice a Saint in Lawn,

* A Printer then residing at *Birmingham*.

A Judge

A Judge is just, a Chanc'llor juster still,
 A Gownman learn'd, a Bishop—what you will;
 Wife, if a Minister; but if a King—
 More wife, more learn'd, more just, more ev'ry
 Thing.

Where, by the Way, the second and third Verses seem to dwell upon the same Distinction—but the whole Paragraph, to the best of my Memory, is exceedingly beautiful. What there seems of *Weight* in this, so far as regards the present Purpose, is, that the Character of a Person in private Life should not be drawn too pompously. Perhaps, I am *too* scrupulous; however, I wish your Ladyship may be full as much so, in Regard to my trifling Criticisms. Does the Affair require Haste, or may it be deferred till I have the Honour of seeing you?—I will, however, for the present, take Leave of the Subject.

I lead the unhappy Life of seeing nothing in the Creation so idle as myself. I am continually piddling in little Matters about my Farm. What do you think of my publishing Verses once a Week upon my Skreens, for the Amusement

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of my good Friends the Vulgar?—My Verses for the present Week are published in VIRGIL'S *Grove*, and run thus :*

Here in cool Grot, and mossy Cell,
We Fauns, and tripping Fairies dwell,
Tho' rarely seen by human Eye ;
Yet, when the Moon, ascended high,
Darts thro' yon Limes her quiv'ring Beam,
We frisk it near this crystal Stream.

Then fear to spoil these sacred Bow'rs,
Nor wound the Shrubs, nor cross the Flow'rs ;
So may your Path with Sweets abound,
So may your Couch with Rest be crown'd !
But ill betide or Nymph or Swain
Who dares these hallow'd Haunts profane !

OBERON.

My Method is a very cheap one ; I paste some Writing-Paper to a Piece of Deal, then print with a Pen. This serves in Root-Houses, and under Cover.

* The Editor is well aware, that the Substance of these Lines has been repeatedly published, but as this was probably the original Reading, he thought that it might not be unacceptable in this Place.

Your

Your Ladyship has been so unkind, as not to let me know how your Pavilion proceeds; whether you are happy in planning, or in beholding the Plans executed—May I hope to hear soon?—Two hundred Pounds expended in a Rotund at *Hagley*, on Ionic Pillars! The Dome of Stone, with thin Lead underneath, to keep out wet. While *I* propose, or *fancy* I propose to build a Piece of Gothic Architecture, at Sight of which, all modern Castles near shall bow their Heads abased, like the other Sheaves to JOSEPH's. I send you the Plan; 'tis for a Seat on the Bank above my Hermitage, and will amount, on a moderate Computation, to the Sum of fifteen Shillings.

I am, very constantly,

Your Ladyship's

Most obliged, and most obedient Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

L E T.

LETTER XXVII.

Duchess of SOMERSET to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Percy-Lodge, June 17, 1749.

Dear Madam,

YOUR Ladyship bids me give you an Account of what Alterations we are making at present, but I feel myself much less able to describe the Fabrick and Furniture of a Palace than a Hermitage, and while I am attending to all my Lord's Designs there, I fancy I'm no better acquainted with the Effect it will produce, than a Person would be with the Beauty of a Piece of Tapestry, who saw only the wrong Side of it. My Lord will do a good Deal to the Front of the House, in order to make it appear less like a Prison; he builds a new Wing on the Right-hand Side of the Garden, which will contain a Library, Bed-Chamber, Dressing-Room, and a Waiting-Room. I think I told you, that all the Sashes, Doors, and Ceilings, in both Apartments, must be entirely

tirely new, and the Floors in my Lord's; the Stair-case is very noble, but will require as large a Lanthorn to light it, as that at *Houghton*, so much celebrated in the News-papers. The Chimney-Pieces in both Apartments are to be all new, and some of them very expensive; the Draughts are mighty pretty. My Lord's Bed on the Ground-Floor is crimson Damask, with Tapestry Hangings; the next Room is furnished with green Damask, on purpose to set off his Pictures; the next with a Set of very fine old Hangings of the Duke of *NEWCASTLE*'s Horsemanship, with his own Picture, on Horseback, as big as Life; and, now they are clean, looking neat, as when new. The Parlour to be hung with some very good Pictures; above Stairs, the great waiting Room, with *Saxon* green Cloth Chairs, with gilt Nails, and green Lutestring Window Curtains, marble Table, and large Glass between the Windows; first Drawing-Room, new crimson Damask, with Lutestring Window Curtains, two very fine *Japan* Tables and Glasses between the Windows, with carv'd and gilt Frames; inner Drawing-Room, Tapestry Hangings, with small Figures very pretty, and as fresh as new.

He lays two Rooms together in the right Wing of the Court, on the ground Floor, in order to make a Chapel, with a Gothic Wainscot, Ceiling, and painted Windows; there is to be a *Dutch* Stove in it, which is so contrived, as to represent a Tomb with an Urn upon it. The Court is to be paved, and the Foot-Way altered; and my Lord is in Treaty for nine Houses on the other Side the Way, in order to pull them down and build Stables, (for there are none belonging to the House) whose Gates are intended to open directly over against those of the Court; if he can agree for this Purchase, he will widen the Street in that Part about eight Feet. Now, dear Madam, I have obeyed, you in the best Manner I am able: but upon looking back into my Letter, I find I have forgot my Bed-Chamber, Dressing-Room and Closet, which one would think, should not appear least interesting to myself; the first of these is to have a new Bed-Hanging, and Chairs of crimson Queen's Damask; the Dressing-Room, which has two large Sashes, will have Tapestry Hangings and green Damask Chairs; the Closet, which is small, and has only one Sash, exactly facing the Chimney, furnished with painted

ed Paper; the Chimney-Piece in the Dressing-Room, is to be of Statuary-Marble and *Giallo di Siering*, and just in the Front of it, the Fable of the Stork inviting the Fox to Dinner, very neatly carved; there is another little Waiting-Room, at this End of the Apartment, for the Groom of the Chambers to be in, in the Morning, or, when I'm not in Form, in the Evening. To return to my *Bergerie*, nothing has been done in it this Summer, nor have I the Heart to propose any Thing, for I'm actually frightened with the Sum my Lord is laying out, about *Northumberland-House*; and I find, by living long in strait Circumstances, one contracts a Narrowness of Mind, which makes launching out at once into great Expence, not appear so desirable, as it would be thought by young, gay People. The cold North Winds have blighted and ruined the Beauty of my Roses for the Remainder of this Year, and starved all the various Flowers, which used to adorn our Clumps and Borders. The Time of our going into *Suffex* remains unfixed; but I fancy it will be in about a Month: and we have taken a new House in *Bath*, for the first Week in *September*, so that instead of enjoying my peaceful Shades, as I used to do,

I appear engaged in a tedious Pilgrimage, and am looking (over the Charms of the Summer Month) to a resting Place in *Northumberland-House*, and where, perhaps, I may never come; the probability is much stronger against me, than it was, this Time five Years, against my ever-lamented BEAUCHAMP; and indeed I am far from well at present, having a most terrible Cough and Cold, with a continual Head-ach and Sicknefs at my Stomach.

I am glad to hear, that Mrs. W—L's seeming Neglect did not proceed from her own Heart, but the Hardnefs of another's, which is a Stranger to all that is gentle or humane. I am perfuaded, your Improvements will add great Beauty to your Habitation, and would make me long to fee it, if I were a movable Being, but you know I never was fond of travelling, and I cannot take a Journey now, but as the *Rhodian Coloffus* might do. Among all my Lord's Acquisitions, none has given me more Pleasure than his Chaplain, who is between fixty and feventy, very well bred, strictly pious, and they fay, is an admirable Scholar; has a Genius for all the polite Arts, is a good
Judge

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Judge of Poetry, has read a prodigious deal, is very *modest*, and at the same Time constantly chearful, but naturally inclined to a solitary Country Life; in short, we are all fond of his Company, from my Lord to the lowest Servant in the House. I am sure you are tired of my Obedience by this Time, and will be glad to see me come to a Conclusion, by subscribing myself,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful

and obedient humble Servant,

F. SOMERSET.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. WHISTLER to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Whitchurch, Oct. 7, 1749.

Dear Mr. SHENSTONE,

I HAVE buried a Friend, who has made me his Executor, and, of consequence, I have had a good deal of Fatigue. I tell you this thus abruptly, because I could not have wrote a Sentence without blushing, till I had, in my Opinion, made a reasonable Excuse for my seeming Neglect of you; you, who so abundantly obliged me by your last Favour. The Flowers were the finest I have seen this Season, though I have seen those of a celebrated Florist this Year—inferior in no Respect, and superior in this, (which weighs much with me) that they will not fade. Such is the Advantage of Art, the Offspring of the Mind, above the perishable Beauties of Nature. I am sure they shall never perish in my Hands, for I shall even piously transmit them down to Posterity,

as

as they deserve. You are continually finding out some new Way to ravish your Friends, and yet that seems needless, since in your old one, I mean that of Wit, you seem to be infinite. All this is so, and so superlatively so, that I begin to think myself a Fool to hold so unequal a Correspondence. I am a Gainer in one Respect, but I am certainly a Loser in another. It is a great Proof of my Affection to you however, for none but mean Souls would, otherwise, prefer their Pleasure to their Honour. To speak in the most sincere Manner, I never am so sensible of my own Inability, as when I take one of your Letters before me to answer it. Emulation immediately ceases, and then you cannot wonder if I fall even below the Bathos of my own Genius.

I know you are, by this Time, impatient to hear what Friend I have lost. It is Mr. BROOKER, of whom you have often heard me speak. I have *got*, indeed, by his Death, but I assure you, no Gain would be sufficient to make me unconcerned at the Loss of a Friend—so far from it, that the Acquisition only adds

to the Tendernefs, and confequently to the Regret.

Now I muft return to the old Burthen. When fhall I fee you?—I long to fee you—’Tis more than GARRICK playing RICHARD to fee you—the next higheft Pitch my Imagination can foar, I long too to fee your Alterations, which I look upon as fo many of your vifible Ideas.

As for my Retreat, it is not worth describing; or, to describe it at once, I may call it a Band-Box, *viz.* “The Citizen’s Delight.” However, I wifh you were in it: and now let me propofe my Scheme. It is the fame I propofed laft Year. It is to meet either here, or at *London*, firft; for I fhall be alternately at both Places, and will order my Route at your Pleafure. I purpofe going foon; but a Letter from you fhall determine my Schemes at any Time. Though if I fhould be at *London*, and you would come thither firft, and afterwards with me to *Whitchurch*, it would compleat my Wifhes, for I long to be at both Places with you. My Residence in *London* is at Mr. PEARETH’S Chambers, *King’s-Bench-Walks,*

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Walks, No. 7; but direct to me at *Whitchurch* as yet.

If you have any Vanity, it must be exquisitely fed by the smallest Favour from Lady LUXBOROUGH. If you have a Taste for Pleasure, refined to the highest Degree, (Why did I say, *If?*) by all Accounts, her Politeness must gratify it to the full. When I say this, I don't speak in the Gross; I don't say, that this Person or the other said she was a Wonder, (tho' that I can aver too) but I go upon better Grounds for my Assertion, than general Applause; I go upon Particulars, from which I have formed a Character that must be beautiful.

You complain of Mr. —. I told him of it, but don't know whether he has made an Attonement. I am a good deal picqued at him myself. Tho' we live next Door to each other, he has spent but one Evening with me since he has been at —, and that was after a thousand Remonstrances, and much against his Will. He neglects every Body for his Wife; in short, *he is no more.*

I hope

I hope you will favour me with a Line soon, and that it may bring "sweet Boadments." All Compliments wait on you. With these I must conclude, applauding myself, whenever I reflect that I am

Yours,

A. WHISTLER.

LETTER XXIX.

The Duchess of SOMERSET to Lady LUXBO-
ROUGH.

Percy-Lodge, Jan. 21, 1749-50.

Dear Madam,

WHEN I look upon the Date of your Letter, it puts me both out of Countenance and Patience with myself. Your Letter found me at *Bath*, from whence, I thank God, my Lord is returned with his Health and Appetite

petite much improved; and I hope, the good Effects of this Journey, will continue longer than those of the preceding Years. Our Servants and Goods have all been removed to *Northumberland-House*, since before Michaelmas, but when we shall get into it ourselves, is yet among the Secrets of Fate. It is still hid with Scaffolds towards the Street, but by the Plan, and the little I could see of it when I was in *London*, on the King's Birth-Day, it will be very handsome, and indeed it should, my Lord destined 10,000*l.* for the Alterations; but I believe he has by this Time experienced, that he deceived himself, at not setting it at above double; for though the House itself will not cost, perhaps, above 14.000*l.* yet the Houses he has purchased, in order to widen the Street and build his Stables, and the Remainder of the Duke of CHANDOS's grant for *Scotland-Yard*, which he is in Treaty for, in order to carry down his Garden, and open a View from his House to the *Thames*, will cost at least as much more. Mean Time, you may guess our poor *Bergerie* has been neglected, and except a very pretty and convenient Hot-House for Pine-Apples, has had no additional Ornament of any Kind. We pass this

Win-

Winter here, which I should not regret at any other Time but as Lady BETTY * is to lie in, and is already gone a Month past her Reckoning, I should like to be nearer to her. I was not eight and forty Hours in Town, when I went to be presented, on my Lord's new Earldoms, and to make my Appearance on the Birth-Day; for I went from hence at Seven on the *Sunday* Morning, and was presented that Day at Noon, and on the *Monday*, as soon as the Drawing-Room was over, undressed and came back directly. I lay at Sir HUGH SMITHSON'S, for I could not have a Room at *Northumberland-House*, and I have never seen *London* since. We have the most glorious Weather that I believe was ever seen in Winter: but, alas! I can only admire it from my Windows, being under Dr. SHAW'S Hands, for the ill Consequence of a Fall, which I had before I went to *Bath*, by a Servant heedlessly taking away a Chair, just as I was going to sit down, and which I took too little Care of at first, so I am now forbid all Sort of Exercise, which gives me but a melancholy Prospect, as to my Health, for the future: but God's Will be done! and I hope I

* The late Duchess of NORTHUMBERLAND.

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shall chearfully submit to the Event, whatever it be.

Have you seen a little *French* Book called *Conseils à une Amie*, said to be written by Madame de POMPADOUR: the Name of the Author will not induce you to expect any very exalted Sentiments of Religion or Morality; but it contains good Rules for making a proper Figure in High-Life. I have also had the Letters of Monsieur RACINE LE PERE, and some Memoirs of his Life, by his Son, lent me; and they give me a greater Esteem for him as a Man, than as the Author of *Ester and Athaliab*. I hope you have seen my old Acquaintance, the Minister of B—'s Answer to Dr. MIDDLETON's *Free Enquiry about Miracles*. I cannot imagine how he can reply to it, without owning himself a Deist, or explaining some of his Innuendos in a different Way to what they appear at first Sight. Mr. and Mrs. WYMONDESOLD's handsome Behaviour to you, dear Madam, gives me a good Opinion of them both. I believe I shall never have reason to alter that which I have formed of my Lord L— for some Years past; and as to that I strove to entertain

tain of him before, 'twas the Work of Art,
and a *Contre-cœur*. As to your Son, I think
he does not act of himself. I am sorry to hear
Mr. SHENSTONE has been so ill, but I hope
his Muse has not left him; I am sure yours
has not; I am confident she attended you very
agreeably upon his Bench. Mr. LINDSEY, my
Lord's Chaplain, (who by the Way is a very
good Judge, and a pretty Sort of Man) prefers
his Ode on Autumn to almost every modern
Performance. My Lord sends you his Compli-
ments; and I am, with a very sincere Regard,

Dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's most obliged
and faithful humble Servant,

F. SOMERSET.

The First of the enclosed Verses are said to
have been written by a Gentleman in *New En-
gland*, the Second by Mr. MARSHAM. If you
have not seen them, I hope they will serve for
a Minute's Amusement.

L E T-

SELECT LETTERS. III

LETTER XXX.

MISS DOLMAN TO W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

Broom, Feb. 26, 1750-1.

I Return you a Multitude of Thanks for the Favour of your last Letter to me. I think you seem to have had as solitary a Winter as we have at *Broom*. This is the Season a Town Life is vastly preferable to that of the Country; the Country now is only fit for Poachers and Game-keepers. Like old DARBY and JOAN, we live now upon the Thoughts of past Pleasures;

In fondly meditating o'er
Past Pleasures, and in hoping more.

However, we have two Amusements which never fail us, and those are Reading and Music. In order that we may enjoy the latter in a greater Degree than we have done of late, we have got Mr. G— over sometimes, you know, who has procured us a new Spinnet, and he says, he'll

he'll make us proficient in the Art of Music presently, provided we will but be diligent.

I have sent for the Pamphlet that is wrote against Mr. G—'s Compositions. As he's my Master, I have a Curiosity to it. He says, it pulls him all to Pieces. I can't tell what Genius he has for composing Music, but certainly he's a very good Music-Master. As a Companion, I do not much admire him: I think he's a disagreeable Man; very mercenary; always full of Esteem for himself, and of Contempt for all others; and does not consider, that it is almost as glorious to acknowledge Merit in other Persons, as to have it oneself: but he sets good Lessons, so I'll bear with him; as Lord FOPPINGTON tells his Shoemaker—"Now by
 " all that's great and powerful, thou art a most
 " incomprehensible Coxcomb; but thou makest
 " good Shoes, so I'll bear with thee." *

Pray have you seen the Memoirs of the House of *Brandenburgh* in *Englisch*, by the King of *Prussia*? I have some Thoughts of buying

* Sir JOHN VANBURGH's Comedy of the *Relapse*:

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the "*Æconomy of Life*,"* but should be glad of your Opinion of it first: it is wrote in the Manner of SOLOMON'S *Proverbs*, which I think is a pretty one. I am very glad to hear that Lady LUXBOROUGH has her Health. The Family at *A—n* are all well; I heard from them this Moment. I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble Servant,

M. DOLMAN.

LETTER XXXI.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Madam, The *Leasowes*, March, 1750-1.

I CAN very faithfully assure your Ladyship, that the Pleasure I received from your *French* Letter was equal to what I expected; and as I can hardly form an Expression that implies my

* A most excellent little Work published about this Time by Mr. R. DODSLEY, and by most Persons, supposed to be his Writing, tho' vague Report attributed it to various Geniuses, namely, LORD CHESTERFIELD, Mr. MELMOTH, &c.

Approbation more fully, I ought, perhaps, to add nothing more upon this Head. However, I can ill avoid being more explicit; for besides that your Choice of Words gives me an agreeable Idea of the *French* Language, there is I don't know what Kind of Pleasure arises upon seeing common or domestic Affairs treated of in a Language foreign to one's own. I wish it may not one Day tempt me to hazard a few *French* Lines to your Ladyship, altho' I have, in a great Measure, forgot the Termination of my Moods and Tenses, and should of course make a thousand Blunders, in regard to the proper Idiom: but if I should, I trust your Ladyship would be prevailed upon to burn what I wrote immediately. Surely it is either owing to the Delicacy of your Choice, or the *French* have great Numbers of Words more expressive than our own: for Instance "*trop bonne pour avoir Besoin de cet Assaisonnement*;" * I know not of any *English* Word that would be proper here besides Recommendation, which is greatly inferior. I have observed the same of many others. But I confine my Partiality to their *Prose*, and I dare say your Ladyship (who

* "Too good to stand in need of this Recommendation."

knows so well all the Beauties of their Language) is also not unacquainted with the Imperfections of it; by which Means you find yourself so well enabled to disguise the latter, at the same Time that you are displaying the former. Notwithstanding the supposed Qualifications of the GLUMS and the GAWRIES excites one's Curiosity, the Book does not, I think, deserve a Place in your Ladyship's Library, and I would not have you purchase it. It makes two Volumes in 12mo. Price 6s. It came into my Way, so I read it, giving it just Attention enough to let it amuse me with the imaginary Scenes it describes. As to what I said of the *Scribbleriad*, you will observe, I had read nothing but a few Quotations, and am now to request your Ladyship's Opinion, who have received the Book. Believe me, my Lady, I am not lazy in *Mind*. I long for nothing so much as bodily Health and Spirits, to be able to acquit myself better of my Share of the Correspondence, and to deserve the Vivacity of yours somewhat more than I do. But when I shall be able to exchange the Cypress Grove for the more agreeable Verdure of the Myrtle or the Laurel, is a Question I cannot pretend to solve—Very

pedantic truly this!—But to proceed: I wrote many ludicrous Things at College, and in the former Part of my Life, and one or two of these am I thinking to enclose during this insipid Season; perhaps taking, like Woodcocks, the Advantage of a Fog, they may hope at such a Time for something better Quarter, though, to speak the Truth, they are much too silly, and your Judgment too penetrating, to give them any Room for such an Expectation. As to printing, I will not say that I never intend it, but I must first be able to spend a few Weeks with my Friend GRAVES, who is a Person of great Delicacy, and whose Friendship may, perhaps, induce him to examine my Trifles with some Attention, no very agreeable Task to him or any one else. Mean Time, the Complaint you make of your present Want of Amusement, gives me an Occasion to pour in Floods of my *written* Impertinence. The *Progress of Taste* I meant to shew you long ago. The *Snuff-Box* (which by interweaving another Poem or two, is now, I see, a mere Piece of Patch-Work) appears before you for no other Reason in the World, but that it happens to be transcribed in the same Book with the former; and is interested

in my desiring you not to read a Line of it. I send also the Ode I first mentioned to the Duchefs,* and would ask, in the first Place, whether it *deserves* Correction? If you would not choose I should immediately destroy it, will you be so Kind as to mark any Improproprieties, or propose any Improvements to me? I hope you will be in no concern about defacing the Copy, in that Case, for I would write it over ever so often, if I could by that Means add a Syllable that was more expressive of my Veneration for her Grace, or that tended to give her a Moment's Amusement. I calculated the *Subject* as well as I could; but I am fearful you will discover nothing but common-place Thoughts. I think most of my Verses smell of nothing but Field-Flowers, and considering how I spend my Time, they can scarce do otherwise.

A Word more, in regard to the proposed Alteration in your Room. If your Ladyship does not choose to go to the Expence of a carved Frame, what think you of a white oval Frame to your Glafs in the middle, and a Festoon on

* "*Rural Elegance*," an Ode to the late Duchefs of SOMERSET. See SHENSTONE'S Works, Vol. i, Page 105.

each Side; this with the Stucco need amount to no more than four Guineas. But the Room is mighty well as it *is*, and you are yourself the Judge, whether the Expence of the Alteration would afford you an answerable Amusement. I am greatly pleased with what your Ladyship mentions of coming to the *Leasowes*; for tho' you will see but little new this Year, yet by allowing yourself some little Time, you will see the same with much greater Ease than you could before; and if I should add, Pleasure, I hope you will allow it to my Fondness for a Place that has engrossed my Care so long. You complain, Madam, of the Want of fresh Ideas, (which I never yet observed in your Conversation or Letters at any Time or Tide) guess, however, what must be *my* Case, who see nothing from Day to Day but

Bleak Mountains and wild staring Rocks,
 The wretched Result of my Pains;
 The Swains, greater Brutes than their Flocks,
 And the Nymphs as polite as the Swains—

I once thought of inscribing these on a Seat,
 but now my very Spleen forsakes me.

L E T.

LETTER XXXII.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

The *Leasowes*,

Dear Madam, May 24, 1751.

I Hasten to acquaint your Ladyship, that my Brother is now greatly better, and, is, we all hope, in a fair Way of Recovery.

What small Hopes I have entertained for most Part of the Time since I wrote last to *Barrels*, have been rather owing to a Kind of Self-Flattery, and an Unwillingness to Despair, than any proper Foundation—but these three Days, his Disorder is so much abated, that they seem to receive some Sanction from *Reason*; not that I am entirely free from Apprehensions. The asthmatical Disorder is fallen down into his Legs, where it continues at present. But what by Means of As's Milk, which agrees with him, the Advantage of a few Days, in which he has been carried Sedan-

Fashion about my Grounds, and the most scrupulous Care, in regard to what we suffer him to eat or drink, his Spirits, Pulse and Complexion are astonishingly recovered, and his Strength and Stomach proportionably restored.

I will not detain your Ladyship any longer on this Head, than to acquaint you, that I have thought about writing to *Barrels* every Day since your Servant was here; but finding all along, such frequent Changes in the Disorder, and being utterly incapable to give your Ladyship any *satisfactory* Account, I had not the Spirit to set Pen to Paper.

This has been to me the most disagreeable Season, for a Continuance, I ever spent in my Life; betwixt sleepless Nights, painful Apprehensions, constant Solitude, Confinement, and an entire Alteration in regard to my Way of Life, I found my own Situation not a little endangered: but as the original Cause begins to cease, I hope the Effect will. I might have added to the former Vexations, the Difficulty of procuring good Advice, and the no less Difficulty of prevailing on my Brother to follow

low it. Such Persons as he ought always to be well; I mean, to guard more than *others* against Diseases, as they have so little Patience in reserve to submit to the Means of Cure.

But to lead your Ladyship from the sick Room into the open Air a little—I am now beginning, for the first Time, to brush up my Walks. The Trees and Shrubs are in full Bloom all of a sudden; I mean, so far as concerns the green Leaves, for the latter have not yet flowered. The Servants are now very busy in cleaning my Grove, &c. whither I stray now two or three Times a Day, with great Complacency. I doubt the Death of poor Mr. H—LL's Brother will occasion him much worldly Perplexity, as well as Concern, at present: I would otherwise press him to spend a Week with me at the *Leasowes*, as some Kind of Relief to him, and a great Pleasure to us. I think a Change of Place, after such an Affliction, is very often of no small Service. That Book of Mr. PEARSALL's which your Ladyship subscribed for, is come out, I hear, but I have had no Copies sent yet. Your
Lady-

Vol. II. p. 82, 83.

Ladyship, I know, intended to oblige *me* by your Subscription, and THAT Point you can never fail to obtain—more I am not at Liberty to say. You will please to mention this Publication to Mr. H—LL; I sent *his* Name, tho' I am not *sure* that he subscribed: but I know he would be the readiest of Men to serve an old Schoolfellow. Would your Ladyship be so Kind as to lend me POMPEY *the Little*? I have read, as I said before, nothing but Physic-Books for these last six Weeks, and I want now to be indulged with somewhat more amusing. I won't pretend to your Ladyship that I am a very great *Physician*, but I consider myself as qualified to make the best *Nurse* of any body in the three Kingdoms. I hope soon to be able to adjust a Time, when I may have the long-wished-for Happiness of waiting on your Ladyship at the *Leasowes*. In the mean Time, I am to return my Brother's Thanks with my own, for every obliging Instance of your Regard, and to subscribe myself inviolably

Your Ladyship's

Most dutiful and obedient Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

P. S.

P. S. *May 25.* I should have sent the foregoing Account yesterday, when it was wrote; but I find nothing to add hitherto, that may *discolour* the favourable Relation I have been giving of my Brother's Recovery. I *will* yet hope that there is some good in reserve for us, which may in *some Measure*, compensate for the gloomy Season we have past—I don't know from what Quarter, but I'll still confide—I hope your Ladyship does.

I did not propose to do *much* about my House this Year, and I now shall do *nothing*. But I know your Ladyship will find some Pleasure in the Conjecture, that the Money which might have been expended upon Rooms or Furniture, has been spent with some Effect upon my Brother's Recovery; without which, the *Leasowes* would have afforded no Pleasure of one while. I hope, with this good Weather, your Ladyship's wonted Spirits will return; I hope, also, that I shall henceforth be able to correspond with you upon more agreeable Subjects than I could of late. Miss DOLMAN desired her Compliments when she was here last, which
was

was about a Week ago. I cannot yet write with any Sort of Spirit; so I will relieve your Ladyship at once from so many insipid Nothings, as I should probably add if I proceeded.

LETTER XXIII.

MISS DOLMAN TO W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

Broom, Oct. 25, 1751.

I Return you the Collection of Poems, which you were so kind as to send me, and can but acknowledge myself very much obliged to you for the Perusal of them.

If I did not expect the Pleasure of seeing them soon again in print, I should have parted with them into your Hands with vast Reluctance, without having taken the Liberty of transcribing some of them for my Amusement hereafter: but something whispers me in my Ear, that you really design those charming * Ele-

* The Elegies published in Mr. SHENSTONE's Works, Vol. i.

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gies for the Press shortly, and that they will no longer be concealed in the little secret Box, from whence I remember I was so rude as to steal them.

Sometime before my Lord DUDLEY sets out for *London*, my Brother and I flatter ourselves, that he and Miss LEA will come to *Broom*, and we hope too, that you and your Brother will accompany them there, whenever they intend us the Honour of a Visit.

I came Home from the *Grange* so much enamoured with the Concert I heard there, that the Desire I had before of being a Performer in such a one has, if possible, taken a deeper Root. CLARENDON calls Ambition a Weed, which, he says, is apt to grow in the best Soils, so I will not be wholly void of it; I will be ambitious of attaining to some Knowledge of two Things, namely, Music and the *French Language*; and in order to do the latter, I believe my Brother and I shall be so very extravagant, as to have a *French* Master attend us at *Broom*, as frequently as we have G—M to teach as Music now.

How

How do you approve of the Scheme of our having two such great Masters both together? Can you say any Thing to encourage us in it or not?

I beg the Favour of you, Sir, to send me your Verses upon Autumn, where you mention poor THOMSON's Death so feelingly; I want it extremely, to shew Miss LYTTELTON, having promised that I would send it her a Fortnight ago: "think of that, Master BROOM, "I pray you think of that." * Surely my Letters are always as dull as a twice-told Tale; yet am I so impertinent, as to send you this long one, without making any Kind of Apology for so doing.

Je suis, Monsieur,

Votre très humble Serviteur,

M. DOLMAN.

* Alluding to an Expression in FALSTAFF's Mouth, in SHAKESPEARE's *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

LETTER XXXIV.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Dear Madam,

The *Leasowes*,
Dec. 30, 1751.

I HAD wrote to your Ladyship long before this Time, to acknowledge the Kindness of your Letter and Present: but I have a most deplorable Account to give of my Delay, and what so good a Friend as yourself will not read without a Sigh. Alas, dear Madam, I have lost my only Brother! A more sincere or truly affectionate one never bore the Name. I cannot now add more; tho' I should not want Matter to expatiate upon his Merit, if I were not at the same Time to revive and lament the Loss of it. He is gone *before me* in the very Prime of his Days, and ere the Force of his Understanding, or the Benevolence of his Heart has been half exerted or known.

Future

Future Letters, and other Conversations, may afford me an Opportunity to pour out all my Soul; at present, I am not enough Master of myself. I find all my Views intercepted: my Schemes, Measures, and even my Heart itself, to be well nigh broken. I have lost that Spirit of a Man, which alone is able to sustain his Infirmities. Every Object round me, that was once the Source of my Amusement, revives a Train of Ideas that I can hardly render supportable. I procure a Set of low Friends to chat around me, and call off my Attention. But the greatest Relief I have found, since the fatal Close of *November*, is what I have drawn from Stupefaction.

Pardon me, my good Lady; I do not mean to make a Display of my Affliction. I mention it, that you may account for, and excuse any Omissions or Improprieties in your unfortunate Correspondent.

Since this unhappy Catastrophe, it has been my Lot to hear of one that must nearly affect your Ladyship. Believe me, my honoured Lady, I am far from an unconcerned Observer
of

of Events, that must afford you either Pleasure or Pain. But I am not in a Condition to *receive* Relief, and how can I pretend to *give* it? One Thing, however, I will suggest—I think CÆSAR confessed at an earlier Period of Life than what my Lord BOLINGBROKE arrived at, that he had lived enough, either in regard to Nature or to Glory.

During the Height of our Afflictions, we can scarce believe it possible they should ever wear off. In my Case, there are some Particulars which render it improbable they should. Yet Time, we find, alleviates the Misfortunes of others, and it is fitting we should hope implicitly, that it may some how diminish our own.

I will excuse your Ladyship from dwelling upon the Subject. Assure me only of the Continuance of your Esteem, and it will be of greater Service than whole Volumes of Philosophy.

Pray be so good as to write or dictate a Letter to me. I earnestly pray that it may be

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the former, I am, dear Madam, with all the
Tenderness of my present State of Mind, your

most obliged,

faithful,

and very affectionate Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

This is the third Time I have begun this
Letter, without being able to finish it till now.
If your Ladyship will favour me with a Line,
I hope to be able to answer it without the
same Difficulty.

I have some Thoughts of waiting on you
at *Barrels* for a Week, when I hear you
are come down, but I have had a Kind of
nervous Fever, for which I have been taking
Medicines. This I did, tho' I knew at the
same Time how ineffectual they must prove.
I was taking Drugs from the Shop to cure
Anxiety of the Mind.

LET-

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. WHISTLER to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Sir, *Whitchurch, June 2, 1752.*

MR. GRAVES has lately set me right as to a Mistake, which otherwise I might have remained in much longer. As I hope to live, I had quite forgot my Promise of writing to you from *London*, and so wondered I did not hear from you. But upon his mentioning it, I immediately, to my great Confusion, recollected my Error. I felt a great deal of Uneasiness, while I imagined the Fault to lie at your Door; but I assure you, much more, since I find it to be at my own. Ingratitude is what I most abhor; and I must be a Monster, to slight such a Favour as your last to me, and from such a Friend. Pray believe me incapable of it, or of possessing a serene Mind, while there should be any Misunderstanding between you and me. I am likewise sincerely concerned for the Death of your Brother, especially as Mr. GRAVES says, it touched

you so nearly, consequently I should advise you to change the Place a little after so melancholy an Affair; and I am sure you can find in no Place, *one* who would be more solicitous to divert you than at *Whitchurch*. I can't ask that Favour of you, because I am so much in Debt to you already. But it would give me a double Pleasure, since I believe at present it might be beneficial to you. For my own Part, I long to wait on you; but my Mother's State of Health is so bad, that I must not think of gratifying that Passion this Summer; tho' I can hardly lay that Hope aside, or forbear saying, that a small Alteration in her for the better would make me pursue it. I have got a little Chaise, which at present I am much pleased with, and I assure you, its Wheels have a natural *Penchant* to run to the *Leasowes*.

I wish'd for you much at *London*. Plays are well worth seeing now. I reckon those who can't be pleased with the present Performances of the Stage, are too delicate ever to be pleased. There are a great many very good Actors, and some (GARRICK and Mrs. CIBBER) acknowledged to exceed all that ever
have

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have been. You must come once more into the World, I mean to *London*; I am sure it will do you good: I find the Benefit of it myself; Change of Place gives me Spirits for the Year, which, I find, fail me very much without—Don't let us grow old if we can help it; and I think Variety and new Scenes are the most likely to keep us young, at least produce the Effects of Youth. I own Life is dull at best, and therefore it is the wisest Way to vary it as much as possible. The most stupid Vulgar (both high and low) find their Account in this Method. Then you must find a double Pleasure in it, who know how to vary it so elegantly, as to entertain others as well as yourself. I assure you, you succeeded so well as to the first, when you were here, that your Praises are still blooming; the agreeable Impression still remains on all. I long to see you, and hope to hear from you. Pray harbour no ill Thought of me, for if I have erred, it was, I assure you, from Mistake or Forgetfulness, and not with Intention. I never did, nor ever can, mean Ill or Disrespect to dear Mr. SHENSTONE, but shall ever be his most sincere Friend and humble Servant,

A. WHISTLER.

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The latter End of *July*, Mr. PERTH is engaged to be with me for six Weeks; any Time before that, or after *September*, my House will be empty, if you should do me the Favour I mentioned.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

The *Leasowes*, June 6, 1752.

MY Conversation, dear Lady LUXBOROUGH, is by no Means equal to the Reception I find at *Barrels*, and if you return me Thanks upon *that* Score, you make me doubly sensible how unable I am to make a due Acknowledgement.

The Day after I left *Barrels*, I had a Morning Visit from Admiral SMITH, Captain WHOOD, Mrs. STANLEY, and her two Daughters, who engaged me to dine with Sir G.

LYT.

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LYTTELTON. These are Ladies of Taste, I think; but Admiral SMITH is the Delight of Mankind! I forgot to mention Mr. MILLER, who seems to recommend my Walks with great Cordiality. I see they condescend to look upon *modern* Plans at *Hagley*, and if they build anew, I suppose it will be in that Style.

Since this I have seen a good deal of Company, more of whom arrive to see my *Walks* than *me*; yet I am not jealous or invidious: my Walks are truly more deserving of this Favour.

Yesterday, I had the Company of Miss LEA, and Mr. HILTON, a very modest and ingenious Man, who came with Lord DUDLEY from *London*; besides two other Parties of Visitants, who engrossed my whole Day.

And now I sit down by *Five* in the Morning to answer your Queries concerning the *Papier-Machée*. It is bought of Mr. BROMWICH, at the *Golden-Lion*, upon *Ludgate-Hill*. What you will want, will be an Ornament

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for the Middle, and four Spandrells for the Corners. I have taken down the Pine-Apple from the middle of my Cieling, and send it you to see, together with some other Ornaments which were never yet fixed up. They will cost (I mean a middle and four corner Ornaments) somewhere about eight Shillings, You may ornament it *more* or *less* tho' as you please. As to the Cracks of your Cieling, (which I don't remember) if they are not violently bad, they may be mended by a common Mason, and the *Colour* will disguise them. As for putting them up, I will send you over a very agreeable Neighbour of mine, who was once an eminent Upholsterer, but now lives upon his Fortune, who seems glad of the Opportunity it will give him to see *Barrels*, and the Honour it will afford him of being serviceable to your Ladyship. They should be painted with Flake White and thin Starch; but all this he will manage to your entire Satisfaction. He is a Person of Taste, has seen a good deal of Life; and tho' he has had his Share of Difficulties, always chearful. You must not offer him any Thing. Thus have I been as short as I can, in pointing out
your

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your quickest Method of embellishing your Cieling. The whole Cove (except the Moulding) should be washed with Oker; but this you may defer, if you please, till Mr. PIXELL arrives.

I beg my Thanks to Mrs. WEYMONDESOLD, for her kind Remembrance of me: am a little fearful her Visit will be too late in the Year; but 'tis in Mrs. WEYMONDESOLD's Power to make *all* Seasons pleasing.

My Lord DUDLEY will be extremely glad to wait on Mr. OUTING: but he must come hither first, and we will adjust the Remainder.

I have taken the Liberty to send this by my Servant Girl, who is desirous to see her Sister and *Barrels*; and really my Man is so much Assistant in the Way of fitting up my Room (which engages me) that I could very ill spare him.

I hope Mr. PRICE is recovered, by the Mention you make of his going again to *London*. I
did

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did not merely ask, but wish to see him here.
And now I must leave your Ladyship for the
Company of my Carpenters; yet am ever
uniformly your Ladyship's most obliged

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. H—N to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Hylton

C—r-H—e, near Coventry,

Dear Sir,

Aug. 16, 1752.

AS I promised to write to you soon, I hope
you will excuse the Haste and Errors
of this Epistle. I was almost wet through
before I reached *Birmingham* last *Wednesday*,
where I eat a Mouthful of Dinner at my Inn,
and proceeded to *Solibull*: there I stopt, and
was told by the Landlady, I should be too
late for the Races at *Warwick*, if I did not
make haste. I thanked her, and proceeded to
Mr.

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Mr. WREN's, who gave me a very friendly Reception, and asked me to stay all Night, which I immediately accepted. We walked and talked much; he praised Gloom and Solitude, and I fine Prospects: not but that (I told him) sometimes I could relish a *grave* Scene, and lo! he opens a Door, and turned me into the Church-Yard, which he said was full of *Graves*, and desired me to tell you the same. Great Alterations might be made there, which he will never do. Next Day, after Breakfast, I took my Leave, and reached *Warwick*, and yesterday came hither. I fear my Business cannot be ended before the Beginning of next Week, as it is Assize-Time, and my Brother is but in an indifferent State of Health. I have wrote thus far, and find my Pen can scrawl nothing but what is as insipid as myself. Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROOKE is dead. The Distemper is amongst the Cattle here. Lord BROOKE is at *Warwick*, and has locked up the Castle Gardens.

I have not been at *Coventry* yet; neither do I intend to enter often into a Place so diametrically opposite to those sylvan Scenes I
was

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was entertained with at the *Leasowes*. Oh! when shall I sit down and end my Days on such a Spot somewhere near you? The money-getting Slaves all think me mad to spend my Life in Idleness, and wonder I have passed another Year without setting up in my Business. Sordid wretches! whose only God is Gold. How despicable must Life appear, when it has past away only in collecting a Heap of shining Cinders! My Resolutions are more strongly attached than ever to retire. When I come over, I purpose to talk with Mr. SHAW about *Palmer's-Hill*, which, if not much out of the Way, I will purchase. I should be glad, when you meet any of the Workmen, you would ask, now and then, how they go on at *Northfield*. I hope yourself and all Friends are well, to whom my best Devoirs, from

Your affectionate Friend
and humble Servant,

J. S. H—N.

P. S.

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P. S. I fear Lady LUXBOROUGH, and all your fine Company, will visit you before I come back. Pray let me hear from you, if convenient. I have wrote to Lord DUDLEY, of whom I begged the Favour to send you this. Adieu!

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Duchess of SOMERSET to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Percy-Lodge, Sept. 9, 1750.

Dear Madam,

I AM extremely sorry for the Accident which prevented my having the Pleasure of hearing from you, and sincerely hope you have overcome all the ill Effects of it. You are very obliging in the Concern you express, for the Scenes of Sorrow I have passed through. I have, indeed, suffered deeply; but when I

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consider it is the Will of God, who never chastises his poor Creatures but for their Good, and reflect, at the same Time, how unworthy I was of these Blessings, which I now lament the Loss of, I lay my Hand upon my Mouth and dare not repine; but I hope can with Truth appeal to him in the following Words:

Questo affano ei fu che non si oppone al suo santo voler: Chio gemo e gli affro tutti il gemiti miei Chio Rango & in tanto Benedico il suo Nome in Mezzo al Pianto.

You are so good, as to wish my Solitude may afford me some Amusement; and as I think it a Duty, while it pleases God to continue us here, not to let ourselves sink into a stupid and unthankful Melancholy, I endeavour to find out such Entertainments, as my Retirement, and my dear Lord's unmerited Bounty will admit of. I have built a Porter's Lodge at my Gate, and am now turning the long Drawing-Room into a Chapel, which will be finished in the Gothic Taste, and have three fine painted Windows; these I
had

had bespoke for *Northumberland-House*, but as its present Owners do not intend that their Chapel shall be in the same Place that we had proposed, they would not have fitted there. The Room where you were so good as to breakfast with us, and my Lord's Bed-chamber, I could not bear to go into since my *irreparable* Misfortune, and therefore, with Lord NORTHUMBERLAND's Advice, have laid them together, which will make a Room of 35 by 21. I shall put up a very pretty Chimney-Piece in it with Paper, on which I shall hang my best Pictures.

The Season for some little Alterations without Doors is now coming on, and I intend some Change in my Rosary, and Openings in other Parts of the Park. I have also erected a little Hermitage in one of the Woods near the Canal, whose Roof is thatched, and its Walls of Straw. I read as usual, and have lately been much pleased with the new Edition of SULLY's *Memoirs*. Besides this, my own Servant and myself have worked five cross-stitch Chairs, and intend three more for my Chapel; they are a Gothic Mosaic, in fine Crimson, and are to have Gothic Frames.

Thus,

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Thus, dear Madam, I have given you an Account of my Schemes and Occupations. My Company, at present, consists of Dr. LE COURAYET, Mr. COWSLAD, and my Chaplain, who is a modest, sensible and truly pious young Man. The Gentleman who travelled with poor Lord BEAUCHAMP has been with me two Months, but left me yesterday. What is come to Lord LUXBOROUGH, or rather to his Son? And why is poor Mrs. WYMONDESOLD to be treated as an Alien? I conclude she did not marry without her Father's Consent.

I hear an extreme good Character of your Nephew, Lord ST. JOHN, which I am sure will give you Pleasure. I must do Lord EGREMONT the Justice to tell you, that it is impossible for any one to behave in a more kind and handsome Manner, than he has done ever since my dreadful Loss; but Mrs. O—N has never taken the least Notice of me. Lord and Lady NORTHUMBERLAND are at present in the Country, and very well. I am so near the End of my Paper, that I must only add the Assurance of being, dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's most faithful and obedient,

F. SOMERSET.

L E T.

LETTER XXXIX.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. —

Dear Sir, The *Leasowes*, Jan. 1753.

THE Letter with which you favoured me deserves my earliest Acknowledgments, and will prove not a little serviceable, in regard to the Subscription we have in Hand. The whole Account of that Affair is as follows: I had been assured by Persons of Veracity, (amongst which I may safely name Lord DUDLEY, Mr. PIXELL, and THO. COTTEREL) that you had generously made an Offer of twenty Guineas towards the Addition of two new Bells to our present Set; and that in Case the Parish would supply what was wanting, it would be a Pleasure to you, Sir, to have your Offer accepted. Upon this Encouragement, I determined to make Trial what a Subscription would produce, and accordingly drew up a Form for that Purpose; intending to write you an Account of the

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Undertaking, so soon as I could form a Conjecture of its Success. This I was upon the Point of doing, when I had the Pleasure of a Letter from you, which, nevertheless, was extremely seasonable, as it immediately removed a Doubt that began to spread, in Regard to your Concurrence.

There is now subscribed, (exclusive of your Benefaction) the Sum of fifty Guineas; and I make no Scruple of raising twenty more, by an Application to such Persons as have not yet been solicited. Be our Progress what it will, I purpose in a few Weeks to give you a farther Account of it; in the mean Time, can assure you, that the Subscription will be pushed forward with all possible Diligence, that it may give us the earlier Chance for the Pleasure of your Company. I have only to add, that the Bells will never sound more agreeably, than when they ring for your Arrival; will be heard no where more advantageously than from some Parts of my Farm, and that you will find no one more desirous of making the Country agreeable to you than

Your most obedient humble Servant,
W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER XL.

Mr. H— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

My dear Friend,

March 20, 1753.

YOUR two last Epistles, of the 4th and 9th Instant, merit greater Acknowledgments than the trifling Return of mine. I am going upon an Expedition in a few Hours, yet must not neglect assuring you, how greatly I think myself indebted to your Care and Informations relative to my Tenants, and beg, if they apply to you again, to tell them, I have lately had a Letter from Mr. I—, who has promised me to be down at Lady-Day, and settle Affairs with them all. The Brickman's Bill is much higher than I thought it would have been. Believe me, between Lawyers and Builders I am almost wearied out of my Life, and sincerely wish myself disengaged from them, especially the former; I hope they may be the last Set of People applied to by you or me.

The Malady you complain of at present is not, I conjecture, so much owing to the Winter, as to Solitude; Cold braces and Heat relaxes. Could you have in Winter the same Round of Company and enchanting Scenes that you enjoy in Summer, your Nerves would, I am convinced, be stronger, and your Spirits more alert. Your Friends (more particularly myself) ought to think ourselves much obliged to you for that small Palliative you administer to your languid Hours, in thinking of, or writing to us. I could cure you much better by a Prescription out of Madame DE MAINTENON'S *Letters*, or our Friend HORACE, than by any the whole *Materia Medica* affords; should these fail, SAPHO, that universal *Panacea*, might prove a Restorative. I think myself very happy in having this Opportunity of conveying to you, (according to Promise) what she says of you in her Letter to me, which I shall do in her own Words, viz. " Pray tell the *Salopian* " Bard, that 'tis my Wish more than Hope, " to preserve him as an Admirer; I would " cautiously avoid losing a common PHILAN- " DER, but a Son of APOLLO is inestimable,"
and

and again, "The Genii could not please more
 " than VIRGIL'S Grove does; Miss H——'s
 " Glass *shews* it perfectly." In the Postscript;
 " Say something clever to my second Poet,
 " and persuade him, I should do the same my-
 " self." You see how far the Lady is gone
 only by my Commendations: she is a comi-
 cal Girl, and I wish you were to see her;
 she has promised me to visit you, as soon as
 our new Road will admit of their Coach, if
 I will escort her to the *Leasowes*.

I was somewhat surpris'd at being nomi-
 nated for a Commissioner of our new Road, as
 my Residence is precarious; my Vote, if ne-
 cessary, will be guided by Merit, and the Di-
 rection of my Friends. As C—— has
 been a Servant to my Father, and recom-
 mended by you as deserving, I will give him my
 Vote, if in the Country. My Lord DUDLEY
 has been apply'd to by Captain W—— for
 his Father, but declined it, and was so good
 to declare to me, he would serve C——
 before he saw your Letter.

The —, who *never knew me at Hales*, met
 me at my Lord's House, and requested my

Vote; my Answer was, I knew so little of the Affair, and my coming down was so uncertain, that I could not declare myself in any one's Favour.

Mr. CREEK I have not lately seen. Mr. OUTING and self set out this Day for *Purford's-Green*, to make a Visit to our honest Friend CHARLES WALKER, where we hope to arrive before this Letter does at *Lombard-Street*.

My Lord, Miss LEA, Mrs. ROCK, and her Daughter, all join in Compliments and good Wishes to you. They are in tolerable good Health, excepting now and then catching Cold. I had the Pleasure of the three last to Breakfast with me yesterday Morning.

Mr. O—— has often been solicited by me to write to you, which he sincerely says he intends when we return to *London* next Week, and with his Compliments, hopes you will forgive the seeming Neglect he has been guilty of. His going to sleep at the *Leasowes*, and my accompanying him therein, has been often

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Matter of Discourse between us. He declares, he will soon write a Panegyric upon Sleep, and the Benefit arising from the unrestrained Occupation of one's own Bed.

I can furnish you with few Particulars concerning Mrs. W—'s Amour. All I know is, her Husband and other People had ocular Demonstration of her Guilt, by a Servant Boy's boring three Holes in the Wainscot, which were afterwards cut in one. I am myself sorry to see a Person possessed of amiable and noble Qualities, so much sunk by one fatal Error; and much greater is her Fall, when the *less* malicious Part of the World condemn her, and declare her Foible of no late Commencement. Mr. O—— tells me, Mr. K— (though I should little have thought it) wears a *triste* Visage on this Occasion, and whimpers that he is much concerned,

Your Glass is done, and I have got the gold Clasp back from the Chafer's. Do let me procure you something, if it is but in Silver, which perhaps you may like as well, and be Money in Pocket.

L 4

Dod.

DODSLEY's Man told me, Mr. GRAY's Poems would come out in about three Weeks. The *Earl of Essex* is a fine Tragedy; I have seen it, and the *Rival Brothers*, but do not like the Plot of the last. I am now reading the *Memoirs of Sir Charles Goodville*, in two Volumes; they are contained in a Series of Letters relative to his Family, and I think some of them pathetic and engaging. FRANCIS either has, or soon will publish a new Play.* MOORE is now universally allowed to be the Author of the *Gamester*.

I have heard SOUTHWELL is now in Place, at his own Trade, and hope he'll do well. I am really glad my poor Patient is happily married, and hope she will not relapse any more into a bad State of Health. I shall be much obliged to you, for the Verses you promise me to Mr. W. LYTTLETON, and believe I shall like them full as well as those you designed for the Colonel, because more friendly than panegyrical.

* The Tragedy of *Eugenia*, replete with Delicacy, Sentiment, and Pathos. It was produced at *Drury-Lane*, under the Conduct, and assisted by the Performance, of Mr. GARRICK.

I wish

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I wish (to the Lord! as O—— says) I had the Spirit of Versification, and I would exert it most superabundantly against two or three of my witty Enemies, and believe I shall one Day endeavour to finish my *Birmingham* Verses, to revenge myself on some *Folk* in and near this Town, for smiling in my Face, and cutting my Throat at the same Time with a Feather. Mrs. R—— is quite sick of their Folly and Hypocrisy, and I believe nobody will ever lament the Loss of their Acquaintance,

Miss L—— is, I think, more improved since she came to Town than before; and I am glad to see her address People with a little more Vivacity than she used to do. My Lord has presented her with a fine new flowered silk Sack, laced Linen, and a Pair of Diamond Ear-Rings, &c. &c. We were all, last Night, at the Concert in *Dean-Street, Soho*, and with your Company had added to our Pleasure.

Upon reconnoitering my Epistle, I imagine it appears a mere *Farrago Litterarum*, or more properly like a *Welsh* Dish, called a *Salma-gundy*

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gundy, which hungry People may eat, but not well digest, and wish you may have any Relish for this of mine.

The most falsely esteemed polite Part of the World, deem long Letters ridiculous and rude; may they ever think so! I am now at my Conclusion of the fourth Page, and will so far avoid an Apology for it, that I assure you, it is only Want of more Time, that makes me conclude this, with the Request of as speedy, and as long an Answer, which will still more firmly (if possible) unite the Bonds of Amity between, dear Sir, yourself and him who is most inviolably your affectionate

and sincerely devoted Friend and Servant,

J. S. H—.

P. S. I shall be at Home again in five or six Days. I should be glad of the Honour of Mr. W—'s Acquaintance. Captain O—blames me for not travelling like an *Apostle*, as he does, with one Coat, one Shirt, one Pair of Stockings, one Pair of Shoes, &c.

L E T.

LETTER XLI.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

Dear Madam,

The *Leasowes*,
April 1, 1753.

WHILST your Ladyship's Spirits appear as perennial as your Genius, I have a deplorable Account to give you of my own. They have been, in short, but few Degrees better than they were the last fatal Winter: and though I was conscious what *apparent* Cause I gave you to be angry with my Silence, I could not bear the Thoughts of answering so polite a Letter as your last, with an Heart dejected, and a Head equally confused. "*Les Morts n'ecrivent point*," says Madame MAINTENON, "*Et je me comptois de leur Nombre.*"

Suffer me to thank you here, Madam, for the very striking Amusement I received from those Letters; I read them twice, and as I have

have sullied the Copy you were so good to lend me, I will send another I bespoke for myself, as soon as it arrives.

The Memoirs of Lord BOLINGBROKE's Life abound too much with Politicks for *me*. I believe the *World* also would be as well pleased with the more private Anecdotes of so great a Man. Herein your Ladyship would shine; and I could wish you to engage in something of this Kind, though ever so short; if not for the Public, at least as an Amusement to yourself and Friends, and a Legacy to the present Lord BOLINGBROKE, or whom else you should prefer.

Now I have begun to mention Books, let me finish the Subject. The *Gamester* I have read no more of, than what I gleaned from the Quotations in the Magazines. I never yet had any Opinion of the Genius of Mr. MOORE, and I hardly think I shall alter my Sentiments, on Account of this Performance. The *Moral*, however, must be allowed to be extremely seasonable.

The

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The *Earl of Essex* I have read; the *unfortunate* Earl of ESSEX! whose Story, whatever it may deserve, has never yet produced a good Line, and now hardly ever will, yet I am willing, with your Ladyship, to make all Allowances for the Writer.

The *Brothers*, which I have also read, is a noble Tragedy, full of refined and elevated Sentiments, and, generally speaking, of suitable Expressions. I am not blind to many of its Faults—but I have read nothing of late Years that has *affected* me more.

Shall I beg the Favour some Time of borrowing "*Manners*," the Book you mention to have read.

I don't remember to have heard you mention any Thing about VOLTAIRE's last Play. I therefore send it—and thus ends all I have to say upon the Article of Books.

I am truly glad to hear that you had Mrs. DAVIES so long at *Barrels*, to counterwork the Effects of this unjoyous Season. For my
own

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own Part, had my Health permitted, I could gladly have borne a Part there ; but I have been little better in bodily Health than I have been in Mind ; and *Home*, when one is not truly well, has more Attractions than Elysium. Pardon this unpolite Assertion, which seems to partake of Selfishness : and yet it is *as* unpolite at least, to offer one's Company to another, when one is not pleased with it one's-self. I deny that Penances can be done at *Barrels*. At the *Leasowes*, I have had many a Winter's Experience they may ; and what adds to their Severity is, that they are no way meritorious.

The Jack was sent to COTTEREL to be copied in Mahogany long ago. 'Tis possible, your Servant may find it ready to take Home.

I was two or three Times in company with Captain SOMERVILLE, when he went to *Westminster-School*. I would send my Compliments, and an Invitation, if there was probability enough of his remembering me, to render it proper : though his Good-nature alone could induce him to visit me now, when there is
not

not a Grain of Amusement to be expected either from my Place or myself.

I hear now and then of Mr. O——, by Means of my *good Friend* Mr. H——. They were both going last Week to CHARLES WALKER's *Villa*; not his Cabbage-Garden *orné*, as Mr. GRAVES calls his Place at *Claverton*, and for which I rebuke him, for fear the Burlesque should spread. The last I heard of O—— was, that he blamed Mr. H—— for not travelling like an Apostle, as *he* did, with one Coat, one Shirt, one Pair of Stockings, one Wig, &c.

I have promoted and accomplished the Addition of two new Bells to our present Set; towards which, however, I give but two Guineas.

I drew up a Specimen, or foul Copy of a Petition to Sir GEORGE, about the Turnpike, and so the People of our Parish have both signed and sent the *Echantillon*.

Pardon

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Pardon me, if I leave half your Letter unanswered. You write so fluently, and at the same Time so correctly, that I am angry at myself, and yet never better pleased than when I come to subscribe myself,

Yours.

LETTER XLII.

Mr. WHISTLER to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Sir, *Whitchurch, May 14, 1753.*

Nothing but ill Health could have hindred me from writing to you, and acknowledging the most agreeable Favour of your Letter. I have been confined ever since *Christmas* with that odious Distemper the Gout. The very Name of it is abominable. What lengthened my Confinement was, that as soon as I was almost well, I fell down Stairs, hurt the
I Part,

Part, and was again laid up; but you'll say, I might have wrote for all this. Indeed I could not. For one of the malicious Imps of the old Demon got into the Fore-finger of my right Hand at the same Time. I can shew the Mark now—Besides, my Mother's Health has been so bad, as quite to dispirit me, and continues to be so; else I assure you, I should think of seeing the *Leasowes* this Summer. But I can't do it, as Things are, upon any Account, nor should I ever forgive myself, should she die in my Absence. All these Reasons have likewise hindered my Journey to *London* this Year. Mr. PEARETH too, has been exceeding ill; so that I may look upon this Year, as unfortunate both to myself and Friends. I hope, however, you have not felt the Influence of this evil Star. That Health and Happiness may attend you, is the Interest of all that know you; mine I am sure in particular; and I can add, that I am thoroughly sensible of it.

I am an Architect at present. Since I have been able to hop about, I have amused myself that Way. I have been altering the Dis-

position of my Rooms, and have made them more commodious as I think: but I will not prejudice your Judgment before-hand. I have, like you, been at some Expence this Way. But there are two Imperfections I have to struggle with at *Whitchurch*, which never appeared at the *Leasowes*; an indifferent Situation, and but a second-hand Head for Architecture. I long to see your Improvements, from those I have seen already. Lady LUXBOROUGH has celebrated you as a Designer very justly and very elegantly.

I have got the Verses, and wonder you did not communicate them to me, for they please me on two Accounts, yours and Lady LUXBOROUGH's. I dare say it would have given me double Pleasure, to have received a Letter from you by the Hand you proposed. I am much obliged to you for your kind Intention, and think myself unhappy I was not in *London* on that Account. Now, though I cannot ask the Favour with any Propriety, yet, give me Leave to say, how glad I should be to see you at *Whitchurch* this Summer; and whenever I have that Pleasure, I beg you
will

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will let me know before-hand, for fear of Accidents. As for my Part, I resolve to wait on you at the *Leasowes*, as soon as ever it is in my Power to do it.

I have one Piece of News to tell you, which most likely you have heard by Mr. GRAVES, which is, that my Brother and Mrs. H—s are married. I think they are very likely to be happy. I had rather have a Relation than a Friend married, for the last is always entirely lost. You have the Compliments of all this Place. But my own I shall always separate from the Vulgar, when addressed to dear Mr. SHENSTONE, from

His most affectionate Friend

and humble Servant,

A. WHISTLER.

LETTER XLIII.

The Duchess of SOMERSET to Lady LUXBO-
ROUGH.

Percy-Lodge, Dec. 31, 1751.

Dear Madam,

APologies between Friends appear so unnecessary, that if you have still the same Inclination which you have formerly shewn to look upon me in that Light, you will never again treat me with the Ceremony of a formal Acquaintance; when you write to me, you give me Pleasure; when you do not, I love my own Peace too well to fancy you are angry with me, while I am not conscious of my deserving to have you so. You see I do not regulate my Correspondence as poor Lady — did her Visits; which she never was to return sooner than her former ones had been repaid.

I am not in the least surpris'd that you were pleased to return to the venerable Seat of your
An-

Ancestors, and the Abode of your first and happiest Days, and find nothing trivial or childish in the Satisfaction you felt, in seeing old Faces full of Gratitude for Obligations long since past, and by you, perhaps, forgot; or in recalling some little lively Incidents in the earliest and innocent Hours of Youth. As for the Wise and Witty of the present Age, I know not what they would say, and I do not design to hear it; they will scarce visit my Hermitage, and I shall not leave it to visit *them*. I hope to dispose of my House in *Downing-Street*, which I would not do, if I ever intended to pass six Weeks in *London*, for I am fond of the Situation. But I find myself happiest in the Retreat which my dear Lord's unmerited Beneficence has made me Mistress of, and fixed my Home upon the Spot of Earth I would have chose for myself. Every Thing both within and without the House reminds me of my Obligations to him; and I cannot turn my Eyes upon any Object, which is not an Object of his Goodness to me. The Satisfaction I take in adding either Beauty or Convenience to my Habitation, is greatly enhanced by the Reflection, that while I am adorning

it, I at the same Time can shew my Value for the Gift, and my Gratitude to the lamented Giver.

I have a regular, and, I hope, a religious Family. My Woman, though she has not lived with me quite three Years, had before lived twenty-three betwixt Lord GRANTHAM's and Lady COWPER's; my House-keeper has been a Servant as long; the Person who takes in my Accounts, pays the Bills, and overlooks the Men within Doors, has been in the Family nineteen Years; and the other, who has lived ten, has the Care of the Stables, and every Thing without. I rise at seven, but do not go down till nine, when the Bell rings, and my whole Family meet me at Chapel; after Prayers, we go to Breakfast; any Friend who happens to be there, myself, and my Chaplain, have ours in the little Library: the rest in their respective eating Rooms. About eleven, if the Weather permits, we go to walk in the Park, or take the Air in the Coach: but if it be too bad for either, we return to our various Occupations. At three we dine; sit perhaps near an Hour afterwards; then separate,

parate, till we meet at eight for Prayers; after which we adjourn again to the Library, where somebody reads aloud, unless some Stranger comes who chuses Cards, until Half an Hour past nine, when we sup, and always part before eleven. 'This to the fine World would sound a melancholy monastic Life; and I cannot be supposed to have chosen it from my Ignorance of the Splendour and Gaiety of a Court, but from a thorough Experience that they can give no solid Happiness; and I find myself more calmly pleased in my present Way of Living, and more truly contented, than I ever was in the Bloom and Pomp of my Youth. I am no longer dubious what Point to pursue. There is but one proper for the Decline of Life, and indeed the only one worth the Anxiety of a rational Creature at any Age: but how do the Fire of Youth and Flattery of the World, blind our Eyes, and mislead our Fancies, after a Thousand imaginary Pleasures which are sure to disappoint us in the End!

I condole with you for the Loss of Mr. PRICE, as a faithful Servant is always a valuable Possession.

M 4

Mr.

Mr. SHENSTONE does me a great deal of Honour in inscribing his Ode upon *Rural Elegance* to me. I am persuaded he is Master of the Subject, for I have heard from People who saw his Gardens not long ago, that they are the most perfect Model of it.

I dare say, Lady NORTHUMBERLAND did not know how near she was to you, or she would not have passed by, without enquiring after you. The News-papers will inform you, that her Lord supplies the Place of Lord WALDGRAVE, in the King's Bed-Chamber. Their Children, I mean the two youngest, were both here, while they made their *Warwick and Staffordshire* Tour, and also till they came from *Bath*. The little Boy is called ALGERNOON, after his Grand-Papa; and is, though less handsome, the Counterpart of his poor Uncle, Lord BEAUCHAMP; his Innocence, his Temper, and his Voice, are just the same, and every Motion of his Body: judge if I am fond of him.

Books you wish me to name. You have undoubtedly read VOLTAIRE's *Siecle de Louis*,
and

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Madame MAINTENON'S *Letters*; I have been entertained with both: he informs the Head; she, I think, instructs, and may reform the Heart. I often regret that I had not seen her Writings thirty Years ago. I have seen nothing in the *Genie* of CECILE, except *la laide aimable*, which I think are pretty. But as for *Fenny Jessamy*, *Betty Barnes*, and their Compeers, I never buy any of them, though I have looked over the two last I have named, in their Passage between Lady NORTHUMBERLAND and Mrs. KINGDON. I hope you will prevail with Mr. SHENSTONE to let me see his *Ode*. There are some Particulars in Archbishop TILLOTSON'S Life, that may amuse you, and a Dialogue upon Beauty, by Sir HARRY BEAUMONT; these are the only new Things I have seen. I have hardly Room to subscribe myself,

Dear Madam,
every faithfully yours,

F. SOMERSET.

I wish you as many happy Years as you wish yourself.

L E T.

LETTER XLIV.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to the rev. Mr. GRAVES.

The *Leasowes*,

Dear Mr. GRAVES,

OCT 24, 1753.

AFTER a long Season of Vanity and universal Diffipation, I return with *unfeigned* Pleasure to a Correspondence with my dearest and most familiar Friends. So just is your Notion of the Permanency of my Affection; and so true it is, that much greater *Civilities*, than any *yet* shewn me by the Great, can never alter my Opinion of the Valuableness of your Friendship. Will you believe my simple Assertion, or shall I take Pains to prove it by the very Nature of Things? I cannot esteem it necessary.

Your Accounts of Mrs. WALKER's Death was new to me. I will write to Mr. WHISTLER shortly, and am in Hopes, I shall *now* prevail with him to give me some Weeks of his Company. Amongst the Strangers who visited my Walks this Summer, there were three or more, as their Servants informed us, who had recourse

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course to these Amusements, on the Death of their Relations. Perhaps the Sight of an old Friend is no less serviceable on such Occasions.

Your Stream, I find, is very considerable; I dare say HORACE's was not larger, though mentioned as "** rivo dare nomen idoneus; ut nec frigidior Thracum nec purior ambiat Hebrum.*" And you are mistaken in imagining that there is no Notice taken of it, for I assure you I have heard it commended here this Summer: I forget by whom. You shew excessive Delicacy in your Dislike of its running over Water-Cresses as Pot-Herbs. Pray what can at once have more Beauty and more Propriety, supposing your Stream to pass through the Kitchen-Garden? But I will not quarrel with you about the Kind of Aquatick, if you will allow me to think nothing more pleasing than *Greens beneath transparent Water.*

When I can fix upon a Painter, to draw me an Head of Lord DUDLEY, (for which he promises

* Fit to be called a River; infomuch that neither a cooler, nor a purer Stream, surrounded *Hebrus*, the *Thracian* River.

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to fit at the *Leasowes*) I will endeavour to get your Picture altered; though BOND,* whose Painting I have heard much celebrated, made no Scruple to pronounce it an admirable Portrait.

I am glad enough to hear of your Encrease of Salary, and begin to think a Sort of Affluence a little more *essential* to Happiness than I have formerly done. Only remember you are *thin*, and do not injure your Constitution.

I enclose you a Copy of that Ode to the Duchess. It would *admit* of many *Emendations*, if it does not want many *Corrections*; but I know not when it will receive either, and I chuse moreover to send it in the Dress it wore at *Hagley* Table. I would send you moreover the Ode to Sir RICH. LYTTELTON, but that it would be grievously irksome to transcribe it at this Time. The *antiquary* Character given the — is not approved. I vindicated it as far as was decent for me; but I believe I must exchange it for a Compliment upon his *Humanity*.

Sir

* Mr. BOND, a Painter in *Birmingham*, an Artist of great Taste and Ability. The Editor of these Letters is in Possession of an admirable Likeness of Mr. SHENSTONE, painted by this Gentleman, for which he is proud to make this public Acknowledgment.

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Sir GEORGE, the Dean, Mr. LYTTETON, &c. made me a Morning's Visit yesterday, and took me with them to Dinner at the *Grange*. Sir GEORGE goes next Week to *London*, and the Family will disperse.

DODSLEY adds this Winter a fourth Volume to his Miscellanies. He wrote to me last Week, to beg a few Copies of Verses; I shall send him the Autumn Verses, and two Copies that are upon my Seats, "*Oh, let me haunt this, &c.*" and "*Oh, you that bathe in courtlye Blyffe, &c.*" in old Characters. Give me your Opinion, what else of mine; and whether I shall send any Copy of yours: they will be read by the polite World. What do you think of getting your Verses upon Medals inserted? But he talks in his Letter as if they must be sent *immediately*.

I desire my Compliments to Mrs. GRAVES, and am satisfied that I never can be otherwise than what I am at present,

Your most affectionate Friend, &c.

W. SHENSTONE.

Excuse this villainous Scrawl; I am not half in Spirits.

LET.

L E T T E R XLV.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. H—N.

The *Leasowes*,

Oct. 25, 1753.

Dear Mr. H—N,

THIS can prove no other than an heavy, stupid Letter, agreeable to the present Disposition of my Mind. The most it can pretend, is to acquaint you, in vulgar Terms, that you retain your usual Place in my Affection and Esteem; yet this may be no trivial Information, now you have accepted a Place at Court, and have left your Friends at Liberty to form Conjectures about your future Conduct; to continue, or to dismiss you, as our Electors do their Representatives. Be this as it will, I confess that I refuse you, and wish that every Court in *Europe* consisted of as honest Men.

You are in the right to decline taking M—s, if you find the Scheme too expensive; and as
he

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he could not have come into your Service, without purchasing his Time out from his Master, I believe it will now be his Point to continue with him till the Expiration of his Indentures.

I am now in some Sort of Doubt, concerning the Management of my Snuff-Box; whether to have it repaired in the cheapest Way, with a figured Tortoise-Shell on the Top, and a plain Tortoise-Shell in the Bottom; or to exchange the Gold of it, and have a figured Tortoise-Shell Box with a gold Rim, *like yours with a gilt one*, only in the Shape of an oblong Square, a little rounded at the Corners. I should have no Thoughts of this, but that my own seems too little and unmanly. Give me your Opinion soon; though, if this latter Scheme includes much Expence, proceed with the former, if you please, immediately.

I desire my gold Clasp and Rim may be directly exchanged; I shall have a new gold Clasp and Rim: perhaps, may enclose a Pattern for the former, before I seal this Letter.

I

Quare,

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Quære, therefore, whether the Man, who makes it, will now allow most in the Exchange.

I believe I shall defer the Purchase of my favourite Waistcoat till the Spring. My Visitants begin to fail me, (though Sir GEORGE LYTTELTON, the Dean, and Mr. LYTTELTON, were here yesterday) my Verdure abandons me, and I have little else to do, than go to sleep for the Winter.

Pray send me the Verses on Miss B—R, by the honourable Personage. As to mine, you may give Copies, if you please; but as they are not fully corrected, I hope whoever has those Copies, will take care they be not printed. I can say nothing polite at present, so must defer my Acknowledgments to the Ladies at *Woolston*, till I write to you again.

Your Letter to Lady LUXBOROUGH was promised, so I think you should by all Means write, though I confess it appears to have been rather too long deferred.

And

And now having spoke to the principal Parts of your Letter, let me consider what I have to add.

First then, your Tenant, old Mr. P—s, of the Hill-Top, was carried in a Hearse, through my Grounds, to be buried yesterday. Mr. I— has been two or three Days in this Country adjusting Matters with your Tenants. — —

— — — — — — — — — —
 — — — — — — — — — —
 — — — — — — — — — —

C—y tells me, you may have your Place supplied at the Expence of five Pounds *per* Year. If so, is it not your Point to come down and live at *Lappal*? I do not herein speak merely for my own Sake. Sir GEORGE told me yesterday, that he had secured me BLOOMER's Cottage. I said, I was obliged to him, but did not ask, after what Manner. He promised to come and dine, and stay a Night with me next Year. In the mean Time, I am beguiled of his dining with me, by *your* venerable D—; for having had an Offer from him, from Mr.

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LYTTELTON and the Dean, to take a Dinner here this Week, the D—, through his great Address, conveyed all these Honours to the *Grange*; and to-morrow, it seems, Sir GEORGE dines with Master PEARSALL. I remonstrated upon this to Mr. LYTTELTON, at the *Grange*, in a Manner pretty forcible, and yet tolerably decent. He excused for himself and them in a Manner that made me quite satisfied with *him*. He is an excellent young Man.

Let these Things serve as Lessons to you, who are a Courtier, not to hope from Ambition to receive the “*Plaisir sans Peine*.”

Adieu!

I am truly yours,

W. SHENSTONE.

L E T-

LETTER XLVI.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to the Duchess of
SOMERSET.

Madam,

June 23, 1753.

I FIND myself at length enabled to obey your Grace's Commands, after a Delay, but ill expressive of the Pleasure with which I received them. But by some Means or other, the Original of this Ode was mislaid, and it was not immediately in my Power, from scattered Materials, to give it once more the Form, in which it now appears.

I fear it is no less requisite to make an Apology for the Freedom of inscribing it to your Grace from the Beginning. In this Respect, I have but little to offer, beside the flattering Imagination, that the *Subject* might recommend it. It would be no small Vanity in me to presume, that in Regard to the more elegant Amusements of a Country Life, I had

the Honour to entertain the same Sentiments with your Grace; however, something of this Kind I must of Necessity confess, if I would give a genuine Account of the Liberty I have taken.

The additional Fragment was originally intended as an Episode to a much larger Poem on the Subject. It was thrown into its present Form soon after the Rebellion, and it is now transcribed, because I would not find a vacant Space in my Paper, wherein I had the most distant Chance of contributing to your Grace's Amusement.

Lady LUXBOROUGH, who does me the Honour of communicating these trifling Productions to your Grace, will not fail to do me the *Justice* of declaring the singular Veneration I have for your Grace's Character. She will testify, with how much Diffidence I offer you such imperfect Compositions, written at a Distance from every judicious Friend, with too much Inaccuracy, by the Side of Meadows and Streams, from which little can be expected, but a Group of rural Allusions. Above

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all she will be so obliging as to suggest, how little I am influenced by any other Ambition, compared with that of being esteemed,

Madam,

Your Grace's most devoted
and most obedient Servant,

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER XLVII.

The Duchess of SOMERSET to W. SHEN-
STONE, Esq.

Piercy-Lodge, near Colnebrook,

SIR,

Nov. 20, 1753.

IF Lady LUXBOROUGH has not been so just as to let you know that she never conveyed your two excellent Poems to my Hand till last *Saturday* Night, you must look upon

me as the most ungrateful and tasteless of all Mortals. I have read them both over more than once with Pleasure: but will it not appear strange, if I confess to you, that the Honour you have done me by the Inscription of the First, and a Stanza or two in the Poem itself, has given me some Pain? And I shall look upon it as a very great Addition to the Favour, if whenever my Name, or that of *Piercy-Lodge* occurs, you will have the Goodness to fill the Blank (which leaving out those Words must occasion) with Stars, Dashes, or any other Mark you please, without suspecting me of an affected or false Modesty, since to either of these Accusations I can honestly plead not guilty. The Idea you have formed of my Character, you have taken from a partial Friend, whose Good-nature may have (and in this Case certainly has) warped her Judgment. The World in general, since they can find no Fault in your Poem, will blame the Choice of the Person to whom it is inscribed, and draw mortifying Comparisons betwixt the ideal Lady and the real one. But I have a more impartial Judge to produce, than either my Friend or the World, and that is my own Heart,

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Heart, which though it may flatter me, I am not quite so faulty as the latter would represent me, at the same Time loudly admonishes me, that I am still further from the valuable Person Lady LUXBOROUGH has drawn you in to suppose me.

I hope you will accept these Reasons as the genuine, and most serious Sentiments of my Mind, which indeed they are, though accompanied with the most grateful Sense of the Honour you designed me.

I cannot help mentioning another Copy of Verses of yours, which, if it is not already printed, I hope you will permit Mr. DODSLEY to add to his new Collection, and that is *Damon's Bower*, occasioned by the Death of Mr. THOMSON. If you should have mislaid the Original, I have a Copy at your Service, which I will transmit either to you, in Case you should have a Mind to look it over again, or transmit it directly to Mr. DODSLEY.

I am, with unfeigned Esteem and Gratitude,
Sir, your most obliged, &c.

F. SOMERSET.

N 4

L E T.

LETTER XLVIII.

The Duchess of SOMERSET to Lady LUX-
BOROUGH.

Piercy-Lodge, Nov. 23, 1753.

I DID indeed, dear Madam, begin to despair of having the Honour, and (what I felt more sensibly) the Pleasure of hearing from you again. I am so subject to fall into Errors, that I was afraid some unguarded Expression in my last Letter might have given you Offence, and yet my Heart bore witness, how far I had been from intending it.

I have been extremely ill the whole Summer, and for some Weeks believed in great Danger; but, by the Blessing of God upon Dr. SHAW's Prescriptions, I am at present, though lean and ill-favoured, much better; yet still obliged to be carried up and down Stairs, for Want of Strength and Breath to carry myself: but I have great Reason to bless God
for

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for the Ease I now enjoy. When one comes to the last broken Arches of MIRZA's Bridge, Rest from Pain must bound our Ambition, for Pleasure is not to be expected in this World; where I have no more a Notion of laying Schemes to be executed six Months, than I have six Years hence; which, I believe, helps to keep my Spirits in an even State of Cheerfulness to enjoy the Satisfaction which present themselves, without anxious Solitude about their Duration. We have lived to an Age that necessarily shews us the Earth crumbling under our Feet, and as our Journey seems approaching towards the Verge of Life, is it not more natural to cast our Eyes to the Prospect beyond it, than by a retrospective View, to recall the troublesome Trifles that ever made our Road difficult or dangerous? Methinks it would be imitating LOT's Wife, (whose History is not recorded as an Example for us to follow) to want to look back to the miserable Scene we are so near escaping *from*.

I have spent the last three Weeks most agreeably. The first of them, the Bishop of Oxford and Mr. TALBOT, passed with us, and had

had the Goodness to leave Miss TALBOT (whose Character I think you must have heard) when they went away. She is *all* the World has said of her, as to an uncommon Share of Understanding: but she has other Charms, which I imagine you will join with me in giving the Preference even to that; a mild and equal Temper, an unaffected pious Heart, and the most universal Good-will to her Fellow-Creatures, that I ever knew. She censures Nobody, she despises Nobody, and whilst her own Life is a Pattern of Goodness, she does not exclaim with Bitterness against Vice. We spent a good deal of our Time in our own Rooms, except in the Mornings, but our Time is a good deal broken in upon. Soon after nine we meet in the Chapel; as soon as Prayers are over, we go to Breakfast, and after that we work, during which, Mr. COWSLAD, or my Chaplain, read aloud; at eleven we go, if the Weather is tolerable, to take the Air for two Hours at least, which Dr. SHAW insists upon my doing. The Moment we get out of the Coach, we see no more of one another till three, when the Dinner is punctually upon the Table. Dinner and Tea are both over
by

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by five, when we retire till eight, and then go to Prayers; after which we adjourn into the little Library, where we work, and the Gentlemen read, as in the Morning, till Supper, a Quarter before ten, and it is a Rule to be all in our Rooms a Quarter before eleven.

We are at present very highly entertained with the *History of Sir Charles Grandison*, which is so vastly above *Pamela* or *Clarissa*, that I shall not be easy till you have read it, and sent me your Sentiments upon it. Miss TALBOT received Lady GRAY's [*Somewhat omitted, perhaps some Remarks on Grandison*] in a Letter of six Sides, wrote with the greatest good Sense and Vivacity imaginable. I fancy she is an excellent and agreeable young Woman.

It is now more than Time to return you Thanks for the Trouble you have taken in conveying Mr. SHENSTONE's admirable Poem* to me. I have wrote to him this Post, and could not do it sooner, because his Letter was only dated *Leasowes*, and I could not find out his Post-Town, without sending to Mrs. STANLEY, whom I do not visit, and who
lives

* *Rural Elegance*, inscribed to the Writer of this Letter.

lives twelve Miles from me. I have expressed my Gratitude in the best Manner I am able; but am under the Necffity of declining the Honour he intended me, and have begged him to fill up the Blanks with Stars, or what he pleases, whenever my Name, or that of *Piercy-Lodge* was designed, and I hope he will oblige me.

You fay, you have been in a Lethargy. Dear Madam, this muft have proceeded from fome Oppreffion upon your Spirits, for which I have known Tar-Water to be a fovereign Remedy, and wifh you would try it. Poor Mrs. W—D! but fince we can fay nothing to her Honour, let us not expatiate upon her Difgrace.

Any Thing directed to be left with WILLIAM PHILLIPS, my Porter, in *Downing-Street*, will be fent to me directly.

I am, dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's moft obliged,
and obedient humble Servant,

F. SOMERSET.

L E T.

LETTER XLIX.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. IAGO.

Dear Mr. IAGO,

The *Leasowes*,
Jan. 29, 1754.

I AM at a Loss how to begin this Letter. I will not, however, in the usual Way, give you a tedious List of Apologies in the Front of it. Some Account of my Silence you will find dispersed throughout the Letter, and as for what is deficient, I will depend upon your Friendship.

There has not been a Person here since you left me, of whom I could obtain the least Intelligence concerning you; and as an Enquiry by the Post was my only obvious Method, and as I both owed and promised you a Letter at Parting, I do acknowledge myself to blame, notwithstanding all the Excuses I can make.

Amidst

Amidst all that Conflux of Visitants whom I received this last Season, I was hardly once *so* happy as I was in *your* Company: I was the happier in seeing you so, and if you remember, I took Notice at the Time, how little your Vivacity was impaired, in comparison of mine. If I was then but a sorry Companion, it was not Solitude and Winter that could make me a better *Correspondent*. That Gaiety and Humour, which you was once so partial as to discover in my Letters, will hardly appear again there, even to the Eyes of my most partial Friend; at least, they will not enliven any Letter that I write in Winter. Yet Friendship still remains; Friendship, like the Root of some perennial Flower, perhaps even then gathers Strength in Secret, that it may produce a better Display of its Colours in the Spring.

This I do not pretend to be an adequate Apology. I know, my dearest Friend, that you both like to see and to hear from me at all Times; but it proves that you have no *great* Loss, either of my Letters or my Company.

I am,

I am, as the Phrase is, deeply penetrated by the Civility of your Neighbour, Mr. MILLER. He took a short Dinner with me once, dropping Sir GEORGE at Mr. PEARSALL'S; he could not have pleased me better: he afterwards breakfasted here, and in general seemed fond of every Opportunity of bringing good Company to my Hole, the *Leasowes*. Do you think that *Radway* or that *Harbury* have no Attractions for me? You know me too well to imagine it—But I truly am not well enough to dare to be from Home. Friends will say, “You may be as free at my House as at your own,” and they will mean what they say. But what is this to the Purpose, if you cannot make yourself so?

I cannot pretend to give you a Detail of what passed since I saw you. Lord D—with myself made one Visit to *Hewell*. I will not say, that his Lordship only, for I also was received in the politest Manner imaginable. We met Mr. and Mrs. WINNINGTON. We took a Trip to Mr. VERNON'S, where we met also Mr. COVENTRY, and a deal of other

I

Company.

Company. All this would afford Subject for Conversation betwixt you and me, but I must not use so much of my Paper to this Purpose.

Lord P—'s Piece of Water should have been only a large Serpentine Stream. I can give you many Reasons. I think him such a Sort of Character, as may *shine* in Company upon growing older; he is, and must be beloved already: he has been here once since, and talks of causing me to come and design for him in his Park. The Plan for the House is right, supposing it right to continue it. His Park may have many Beauties. I hope some time to meet *you* there.

My Ode after long Delay has been sent to the Duchess of SOMERSET. It has produced me two genteel Letters from her Grace, and I am pleased with the Event, for some Reasons which I could mention.

Soon after this, DODSLEY asked me to contribute to a fourth Volume of his Miscellanies. I meant at first to do so pretty largely; but I
after-

afterwards changed my Mind, and determined to send only little Pieces. I did send him several of my own, some of my Friends WHISTLER, and GRAVES, and some accidental Pieces of yours, which lay in my Drawer. I meant to send something of yours of my own Accord, if I was hurried, otherwise not without applying for Consent. He wrote me word, last Week, that his Publication must be deferred, upon Account of the Elections, so that we shall now have Time enough to meet or write upon the Subject. What I purposed was your *Linnets*, "I owe, &c." Dick G—s sent me the inclosed little comical Fable; I made some few Alterations, and put it into DODSLEY's Hands. Be so good as to return it, as I have now no other Copy.

Some Correspondence I have had this Winter with Mr. H—N, about Toys and Trinkets, which he gets done for me in *London*. He is by far a better Friend and Correspondent than a Poet. Should you take a Trip to Town, he would be quite *proud* to see you.

I am like the rest of the World, perusing *Sir Charles Grandison*. I don't know whether that World joins me in preferring the Author's *Clarissa*. He wants the Art of Abridgment in every Thing he has yet wrote.

My dear Friend, pardon this flegmatic Letter, and cherish and preserve your own Vivacity. If Occasion offers, do not neglect to call upon me, for my own Sake, and believe you have not alive a more lasting, or, more affectionate Friend, than

W. SHENSTONE.

L E T-

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LETTER L.

The Duchess of SOMERSET to W. SHEN-
STONE, Esq.

SIR, *Piercy-Lodge, Dec. 18, 1753.*

I WOULD sooner have returned you my
Thanks for the Favour of your most truly
obliging Letter, but was afraid of being too
troublesome, by engaging so much of your
Time, which you know so well how to em-
ploy to better Purposes.

The kind Offer you made me, of sending
me any Thing you occasionally happened to
write, I look upon as the highest Obligation;
and you will greatly add to it, if you will
permit me to shew them to a very ingenious
Friend of mine, whose Ingenuity is her least
Praise, since the even Chearfulness of her
Temper, the Candour and Integrity of her
Heart, joined with the most unaffected and
honourable Piety, must claim the Esteem of all

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Lovers of Virtue, who have the Happiness of being acquainted with her. You may possibly have heard of her, as in her very young Days, some little Things of her writing got abroad, which were thought worthy of Notice, considering the Age she was then of. She is a Granddaughter of old Bishop TALBOT's and Niece to the Lord Chancellor of that Name. She has lately spent six Weeks with me here, and went away only last *Thursday*.

I take the Liberty to send this Letter without a Cover, as I am conscious that nothing I write is worth double Postage, since its only Meaning is to express the Regard with which I am,

S I R,

Your most faithful and
obliged humble Servant,

F. SOMERSET.

L E T.

L E T T E R L I.

Mr. H— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Mr. SHENSTONE,

FEW People can boast a greater Sensibility of the Obligations conferred upon them than myself, and few are, I believe, less able to repay them: but that I may not appear quite defective in both, I will endeavour to send you a long, though not a very elegant Epistle, in return for the many obliging ones you have favoured me with.

My Spirits, like yours, have a Tendency towards Retirement, and whatever brings them into violent Action, is sure to destroy them. No less than ten or twelve Persons in different Parts of the Town, who are lately arrived from the Country, have I been obliged to attend to one Place or another, which, with my own Affairs likewise, have often made we wish to dwell where no one should find me out for

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seven Years to come. Mr. B—H was one of my Visitors, and brought great Complaints from SAPPHO, and the Ladies at *W—n*, against me, for not writing according to Promise; I have wrote her a very penitential Letter of two Sheets, which I hope will make an Attonement, and produce an Answer. Thus far have I wrote a Week ago, and by many Occurrences have been prevented finishing my Letter till this Day, when I received yours of the twelfth Current, to which, as well as your former Epistles, I will scrawl forth some Things by Way of Answer.

I have at last got (after having two returned) a gold Pencil Case made to my Mind for you, which with the *Ægyptian* Pebble, and some Impressions of my Seals, I packed up in a Box, and carried them myself to the *White-Horse*, in *Friday-Street*, last *Tuesday*, in Order to go by ROWLEY's Waggon, but he was gone before I arrived there; which induced me to leave the Box (packed up in blue Paper, and sealed with my Arms) in the Hands of the Woman of the House, who promised herself to deliver it to-day to old DANKS, and hope you will

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will receive it safe some-time next Week. The Pebble I was obliged to return, for I did not think it was made concave and convex enough; it is not quite as I would have it, however, it is as well as I can procure it, and if it pleases you, it will please me of course. I saw a beautiful Onyx at the Lapidary's, eight Inches long or more, and four broad, it was to be cut for an Etwee. I have bought a Sheet of China Paper, pink Colour, bigger than this, for one Shilling and Six-pence, and some few Prints, a new Pair of fine silver Buckles, &c.

If I could be astonished at any Thing, it would be at the Perplexity and Delay of the Law; and to compleat my Amazement, my Attorney has presented me with a Bill of Costs of more than two hundred Pounds. Positively I will leave *London*. My Scheme is this; to board at *L—*, and see no Company, except yourself and Lord DUDLEY's Family, on any Account whatever. Do stand my Friend, and advise me what do in regard to settling there. I propose to send down my Cabinet, and some other Boxes, very soon. If you will be so good

to make JOHN TAYLOR and SAMUEL PARKES set their merry Men to work for me. I will prepare to depart from *London* the Beginning of next Month; must call for a few Days at *Gore-Lands*, as being the first visiting Place in my Rout; next, *Oxford* will detain me a little while; from thence to *Edge-Hills*, (to see Mr. T—N, who I hear has got a Living of three hundred Pounds *per Annum* lately fell to him;) next to *Coventry*, where I must stay a Fortnight, or perhaps a Month, then to *Birmingham*, and then to the *ne plus ultra* of my Tours till next Summer, of which I can say nothing certain; however, I will live in *Spe melioris Ævi*,* and, with sometimes your Company, I shall esteem myself happier than if I remained here. Pardon me, when I confess, I fear you will think me altered in many Respects; that I am no very eligible Companion is most certain: what with the Intricacy of my Affairs, indifferent Health, (for my Pain in my Breast has troubled me much of late) and some other Incidents, I am rendered so stupid and confused, that I scarce can rank myself a Degree above the veriest

* In Hope of better Times.

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veriest Boor in the Country; and when I come down, I shall put a quick Stop to all the intended Visits from all the *Jack-a-Nokes's* and *Tom-a-Stiles* of *Hales-Owen*, even though that double-faced *Janus* you mention were at the Head of them, peeping in at both Doors at once. I absolutely have laughed very heartily this Afternoon, at your odd Account of the old Cur, whom I should take great Pleasure to mortify, or even to mar, for he can never be mended before the D—l has him.

I fear your Anger against me is at this Hour, (past eight at Night) at a Crisis; another very pestilent Fit will arise, worse than the former on *Monday*, which I prognosticate will go off at the same Time, the very Instant you read this Part in my Letter. Am not I *very* vain, to think you can so *very* easily forgive me; I fear you will have more Reason to find Fault with me in the Country, when I shall be so much nearer to you then than I am now. I do not fish for a Compliment, when I say, I have many dark Spots for a few white ones; but I flatter myself, you will have the Goodness to bear with my Foibles, more than any
body

body else. Be not angry at me for not enclosing this to Lord D—y. I write so often there, and so seldom have answers, that I fear his Lordship will think I make too free with him: I desired a few Franks a while ago, but have heard nothing concerning them; however, do make my respectful Compliments at the *Grange*, when you go there. I hear that Miss DOLMAN and Miss MILLWARD are in *London*; the former I have not seen, and the latter I am unacquainted with.

I lately contracted some Acquaintance with a Gentleman who is a great Virtuoso, he is a F. R. S. and has a very fine Collection both of Medals and Fossils, especially the latter, which he is willing to increase, at the Expence of the former. I told him of the *Dudley Lime-Pitts*; he shewed me some Fossils, like those you gave me from thence; begs me to procure him all I could lay my Hands upon, and he would exchange Medals for them. I should be obliged to you, if you meet with any more, to reserve them till I come down, and in the next to inform me, if you are likely to procure any for me, as I have promised
the

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the Gentleman to visit him again soon: you must not let the D—y Fellow impose upon you, he is ignorant, though impudent. The Gentleman's Name is B—E, of *Swedish* Parents: I bought some silver Coins of him very cheap. I saw the famous Mr. A. POND at his House in the City, who had a Diamond on his Finger, which I think outshone the D— of E—'s, who I find is, as a F. R. S. an Acquaintance of theirs. The D—n is gone to E—r.

What to say concerning Miss — I know not! All has been done, and said, and thought of, by all of us that could be. I pity her for her Mother's, as well as for her own Sake, and should be sorry to have her Mother think her incapable of going into the World; I do assure you, (under the Veil of Secrecy) she is too giddy, young and thoughtless, as well as proud, to know her own Interest, or even, knowing it, to pursue it. A young Lady will not bear with her; and it would be somewhat difficult to introduce her to one of middle Age, who would strictly keep her under her Eye, and improve her by Advice and Instruction

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tion more than Command; for she has at School a great deal of Work to very little Book, which I am certain makes her, at her leisure Hours, fly to Amusement rather than Study. Do not mention this to Mrs. R. I will talk to Mrs. B— concerning her.

The Post-Bell rings, and I must conclude this with assuring you,

I am,

dear Sir,

Your most affectionate and obliged,

March 16, 1754.

J. S. H—.

P. S. I am reading the Abbe de MABLY's Remarks upon the *Romans*. It is too concise for them who have read but little of their History. I will bring it down.

LETTER LII.

Mr. H— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Mr. SHENSTONE,

MY last Letter will reach your Hands this Evening; it will be very unamusing I dare say, and though I snatch this Moment to write, I do it at the Expence of postponing many other affairs; but the melancholy Occasion demands, nay compels it.

Poor Miss D— expired yesterday Morning at three o'Clock; Dr. B— and Mr. S— were called up to no Purpose. Miss M— fell into violent Hysterics, and is now very indifferent. What sad Catastrophes oftentimes attend the most desirable and innocent Pleasures! I will say no more of this Matter to you, as I believe every Body of her Acquaintance must regret the Loss of her.

I saw Mr. CRAWLEY to-day, who enquired after your Health, &c. desiring his Compliments

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ments to you. I am by him informed, that Miss L— is one of Mr. W—'s Executors, and will inherit great Part of his Fortune; tho' the Will has a Caveat lodged against it, which may probably cause some Trouble before she can enjoy what I hope will render her independent of the World. Pray do you know whether Lord D— is coming to Town or not? I hear he is.

My Cabinet and Boxes did not go last *Saturday* it seems, but will next—When I shall follow them I know not; my Attorney tells me, I must stay in Town till my Cause comes on, and is over. I have taken another Lodging, but shall not go to it till the Middle of next Month; and even then would have you direct your Letters here as usual. I never shall like another Lodging so well as I do this.

My Brother, who is my principal Witness, is to come up; in short, I have little Time of Relaxation, either to Body or Mind, and wish I were once settled in the Country. Your kind Invitation to the *Leasowes* obliges me much,
but

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but do not press me to see Company, whilst I am so much happier *there* without. By Company, I mean Visitors whom I am unacquainted withal.

Sir G— L— is to be Treasurer of the Navy, as reported. People tell me, -I should make an Interest for myself in his Favour. How am I to introduce myself? Believe me, I had rather live at L— comfortably upon a little, than be at any great Pains to acquire much here. Pray write soon to

Dear Sir,

your ever affectionate,

Brook-Street,
March 28, 1754.

J. S. H—.

LET.

LETTER LIII.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. H—.

Dear Mr. H—, *March 29, 1754.*

I Write in the utmost Astonishment and Confusion of Spirit!—I wonder Mr. C— did not give me some Intimation of Miss D—'s Illness before. However, all her Relations will think themselves lastingly indebted both to him and to all beside who have contributed their kind Endeavours to further her Recovery. We are under a terrible Anxiety concerning her. Satisfied as I am of the Abilities and Vigilance of Dr. B—, and convinced of the friendly Care of her Acquaintance that attend her, I shall dread to look into the Letter that I expect by to-morrow's Post. God grant it may be favourable! I have Hopes given me to-night; Mr. D— sends me Word, that the Letter he received on *Thursday* (probably written after yours) acquainted him, that the Pustules began to turn; that she was then better, and that they hoped the worst was past.

Be.

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Believe me uniformly your Friend, but do not expect me to dwell upon many Particulars to-night, nor suffer any Thing I have said to discourage you, in your Scheme of retiring into this Country. Will not the *Grange*, or the *Leasowes*, be endurable for one half Year, and *that* the *Summer* half Year, when they dress themselves afresh to please you?

Your Cabinet nor Oysters are neither *yet* brought me, whatever be the Reason. Leave my Compliments to dear Miss D—, and all that attend on her. Send me five Lines at least every Post next Week.

Adieu!

LETTER LIV.

Mr. H— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Mr. SHENSTONE,

I Really compassionate your Sufferings, both of Body as well as Mind, the former (the Tooth-ach I mean) may perhaps soon be remedied, the latter, I fear, must be effected by Time, But it is needless, as well as impertinent, in me to moralize to you upon this, or any other unavoidable Misfortune, who know how to reconcile the seeming Contradictions in the Decrees of Providence, and to submit to them in a better Manner than People of weaker Judgments than yourself can. Let me have the Pleasure, my dear Friend, to find your Spirits unbroken by this Shock, and endeavour to shake off the Melancholy you are too subject to indulge, to the Prejudice of your Health, when Accidents like this, or sometimes less, befall you. I have not seen Mr. C—, (nor can I till *Thursday*) therefore do not pretend to send you

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you any more Particulars, relating to the unwelcome News you have received. I beg, if you would have me think you well, to let me hear from you immediately.

I am extremely pleased with your Argument upon Enmity and Revenge; it is my own Way of thinking, yet I often lament, that I am compelled to act contrary to it, in the Prosecution of my Law-Suit against ———, the faithless Guardian of my younger Days and shattered Fortune. *If any Man will take my Coat, I must give him my Cloak also.* This is very self-denying Doctrine, and what I scarce think was intended to be literally accepted. I have been these three Days past attending on my Attorney, about settling some disagreeable Truths relating to my Cause; and greatly wronged as I am, I would forgive the Author of my Evils, if he would restore what he unjustly detains from me, and banish himself from my Knowledge, without calling him to Account for what his Extravagancy has hitherto robbed me of; this I fear he will not do, and Self-preservation will compel me to take all Advantages I can.

P 2

I am

I am greatly concerned to think, I shall not be able to come down before the End of Summer. I will write to Mr. I—, to see what he can do with A— T—, in order to make him quit, when he meets him at *Birmingham*; am much obliged to you, for the Trouble you already have had, and still offer to undertake to serve me.

As I am in great Expectations my Cause will be determined this Summer, I would defer doing any Thing material at L— till it is over, unless it be putting the Parlour in some Repair when the Tenants quit, which I shall desire them by Mr. I— to comply with.

More Particulars I will mention in my next, and will write next Post, notwithstanding Franks, I am told, will not go after to-night. Adieu, dear Sir, and let your next assure me, of your being as well as I can wish you, which will be the greater Satisfaction

to your ever affectionate

J. S. H—.

Brook-Street, April 2, 1754.

L E T-

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LETTER LV.

Mr. H— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Mr. SHENSTONE,

I Should not have let two Posts slip away since I received your last Letter, dated the 6th Instant, could I have avoided such an Omission ; I will give my Reasons for so doing before I end my Letter.

When I reflect upon the melancholy Situation of Mind you labour under, I think I should not indulge it. It is offering an unavailable Sacrifice to an irremediable Misfortune. I can sympathize with my Friend, and partake of his Grief, yet it is not, I believe, any Impeachment of a compassionate Temper, to endeavour to remove those Ideas from the Mind (if they impair the Health of the Sufferer) which are too violent for it ; even though the Object were (if possible) more meritorious than the greatly-lamented Lady who was so

suddenly hurried from us : however, while this Catastrophe is so recent, I may venture to write upon a Subject which I hope Time will draw the Veil over, though not totally efface ; you expect it from me ; yet I know few Particulars that have not very probably reached your Ears by other Hands. I purposely avoided going to Mr. C—'s, by Reason of the great Confusion they were in, till the Middle of this Week, when I called, and paid the Thanks you desired, both to that Family and Dr. B—, for their Care and Attendance. Mrs. C—'s little Girl was sent out of the Way, and is not permitted to come Home yet ; she has been so ill herself, that it was feared she would have miscarried, but is now better. Miss M—D came into the Room while I was there, and asked much after you and Mr. D—, whom she was glad to hear was gone to D—'s. She desired me to remember her Compliments when I wrote to you, and should be glad to hear how you were in Health. I thought she looked a little Wild, and was fearful of mentioning any Thing that might disorder her again ; they tell me, she is, in a Manner, quite well, for when she was at the worst, *Ophelia* in *Hamlet*,

let, Mrs. B— said, could not equal her Delirium.

Mrs. B— could scarcely refrain her Tears when she spoke upon the Subject, and it gave me great Pain to hear her Detail. She told me, the Doctor left her at half an Hour past ten as well as could be expected. At three in the Morning, the Nurse went down Stairs; Miss M— dropt asleep, when Miss S— perceived the poor Lady struggling to spit, and though every Assistance was immediately at Hand, she expired in less than five Minutes. The Doctor returned, Mrs. B— said, so affected, that he did not recover his Spirits for two or three Days afterwards, and wished often, that he had never known her, though every body is well satisfied with what he did; Miss M—, in particular, spoke in Raptures upon the Tendernefs of Conduct, and friendly Affability that appeared through his whole Attendance.

I will here put an End to my Narration. I fear I have said too much, and am almost inclined not to send what I have wrote. My

Motives for not writing sooner appear on the other Side; only a disagreeable Hurry you will find.

You may, perhaps, remember me to have mentioned a Relation I had in *Norfolk*, of my Name, who always was seemingly fond of me, and having no Children, promised to make me his Heir. I was sent for by a Gentleman, a few days ago, who informed me, he was dead and buried; that his Will was proved in the Country, the Contents of which he knew nothing of; but that the Executors have sold off all his Effects. I wrote last *Tuesday* to an Attorney near there, to whom I gave Orders to seek out the Executors, and send me a Copy of the Will. My Time has been somewhat employed in seeking what Intelligence I could amongst his Acquaintance here, who none of them had heard of his Death. I never had any great Reason to expect any Thing from this Gentleman; and I think it an Abuse upon a Person's Credulity, to amuse and deceive one with unmeaning Promises and false Hopes. If I am disappointed, I will not suffer it to grieve me one Moment, but forget it

it

it as soon as possible ; to which Purpose, I will (if Mr. I— can spare me) come down to the *Leasowes* for a Week or two, as my Cause will not come on these two Months, I believe.

I do not find that Mr. COVENTRY and Mr. PYTTs are likely to have an Opposition in *Worcestershire*, therefore my Appearance will not serve them much, but only will prove an unnecessary Expence to myself. I have been importuned, by many well-wishers to me, to congratulate Sir G— L— on his new acquired Honour. Where would the Advantage be to either? I declare I would not (contracted as my Fortune is) willingly accept a Place of one hundred Pounds *per Annum*, to be confined to one Spot. I wish I were once fixed at some Certainty in the Country, and twice that Sum should not move me. I seemingly contradict myself, but you understand my Meaning. *I would not sell my Liberty.*

Let me beg you to write to me soon ; I hope you will be more capable of so doing than you were a while ago. Remember me
to

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to Lord D——'s Family, whom I wish (the better Part I mean) Success and Happiness. I can learn no Particulars concerning Mr. W——'s Affairs. Miss R—— dines with me to-morrow, at Dr. B——'s. I am obliged to break off— Believe me, with every good Wish for your Health and Welfare,

Dear Sir,

your most affectionately devoted

Brook-Street,

April 13, 1754.

J. S. H—.

P. S. I have wrote to I— I—, at L—, to quit the Rooms, that they may be repaired. I thank you kindly for taking Care of my Boxes. I have seen many curious Fossils at Mr. BRANDER's, who has promised me some of his Duplicates. I can't procure the Plates of your old Box; they were thrown away: but I will bring something better in lieu of them when I come down.

Pray present my Compliments to Lady LUXBOROUGH when you write. I have not heard from

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THE Arrival of your Servant gave me a retrospective View of my own intolerable Omissions, and oppressed me with somewhat like the Load of an evil Conscience. I must allow that Appearances make against me; and yet I must and will assert, that there is no one has a truer Respect for Mr. D—, a deeper Sense of his Civilities, a greater Relish for his Company, or a more lively Desire to partake of those Beauties which he is daily distributing round his Situation. Of these last, Miss F— F— has sometimes favoured me

with the greatest Encomiums: I am sure she knew how much I should enjoy them, and might also mean them as Inducements (which I never yet wanted) to hasten the Visit I intended you at *W—*. Alas! neither her Pleasure in giving me these Descriptions, nor mine in receiving them, were unmixed with Pain; as she was too often forced to adjoin but an indifferent Account of poor Miss D—'s Health. For this, and for the Affliction it occasions you and Mrs. D—, I really feel a Concern that I am not satisfied to express in the ordinary Forms of Condolence.

I have passed this Summer in a Series of Dissipation; betwixt some Events disagreeable enough, and others that wear at least the Appearance of Pleasure. I have done (what *I* must call) a good deal round my Place. Company produced new Operations, and new Operations produced almost daily Company. The Line of my Path is now almost universally extended to the Sides of Hedges, and, together with some slighter Improvements, have been added two new Cascades: of the first of these, I believe you have heard some Account; it is
really,

really, if you'll pardon such an Expression from the Proprietor, a very *great* Thing for the *Size* of it.

My Servant has been *weekly* upon the Point of setting out for D— House, ever since the Time I first heard of your Return to it: but as he is here much less of the Footman or Groom, than the River-God, he has been almost continually called upon to unlock and conduct his Rivulets; for this Fortnight, indeed, or three Weeks last, he has been less importuned on that Score; but then, during that Space, arrived a Visitant, who is now with me in the House, and, till the Time of whose Departure was ascertained, I was unable to fix a Day when I could wait upon you and Mrs. D—: I hope to do so about the Middle of next Week; and will not fail to send Tom over upon *Monday* or *Tuesday*. If he can be of any possible Service, in Regard to the Cascades you proposed (and I think his Head a clear one) you are welcome to command him over as often as you please. I have detained your Servant much beyond the Time he purposed to return. I can therefore only
 desire

desire my best Compliments to Mrs. D—, and assure her, that my Muse is not less at her Service, and beg your Acceptance of this Ode to, &c. and would, I am sure, esteem it greater Honour to embellish your Place than mine. I wish you do not find it obscure; however, if it discover but an ordinary Talent for Poetry, it will discover at least a warm Attachment to rural Improvement. With this I shall be quite contented, so long as I think it has the least Tendency to recommend me to Mr. D—'s good Opinion.

I am,

dear Sir,

yours and Mrs. D—'s, &c.

L E T.

LETTER LVII.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Lady LUXBOROUGH.

The *Leasowes*,

Feb. 27, 1755.

Dear Madam,

I FIND it necessary to write to your Ladyship this Week, not being able to endure that you should think hardly of me, during the Time that may elapse before I can possibly see you. When I have the Honour of doing so, I trust that I can erase any unfavourable Impressions, and very fairly acquit myself of all voluntary Neglect; meantime, let me only beg, that you would suspend your Accusation. I wish I could fix a Time for the Performance of this Visit, but it is not in my Power: such Weather as the present does not only numb ones Limbs, but extends its Severity to our Projects, Hopes and Resolutions. Your Ladyship well knows how Winter affects *me*; and have indeed yourself remarked it in the very Style of my Letters.

I am

I am dull enough to be unworthy of a Conversation much inferior to yours; and if I add, that I am a little peevish withal, I shall do myself no Injustice. Were it then possible to retain the same venomous or torpid Qualities, when arrived upon the Coast of *Barrels*, I ought in common Policy to confine myself at Home: but I have been, and am confined upon a different Score, a Kind of Partition-treaty with Master D——, and when this is concluded or broken off, as I trust will soon be the Case, I shall not then draw Excuses from the Stupidity with which it is my Fate to be *visited* in Winter. I have, indeed, sometimes imagined, that I brightened up in your Company, when I had before esteemed it as impossible as that you should polish a Piece of Cinder or of Sponge.

I have expected to see DODSLEY's Miscellany advertised six Weeks ago. Had he allowed me but one Half of this Time to deliberate, I could have adjusted the Share we have of it much more to my own Satisfaction. I know but little what he has done, in Consequence of that discretionary Power, with which, through

mere Haste, I was obliged to intrust him; and this possibly at a Time when his own Hurry was as great as mine. But this I know, that in all I did myself, you may expect to trace the Finger of Stupidity precipitated.

Stupidity, however, is many an honest Man's Lot; Presumption is less excusable; and it is with the utmost Humility, that I beg your Ladyship's Pardon for the Liberty I took in proposing what I thought might be an Improvement of your Verses. I have only this to plead, that you write these lively Pieces almost extempore; that you lay no Strefs upon them, and scarce ever revise them; that, on these Accounts only, I thought it possible an Expression not altogether exact might here and there escape you; that finding my Proposals disapproved, I did all my *Time* would allow, to cause DODSLEY to have Recourse to your original Readings; and if he *have* not done so universally, (as I apprehend may be the Case) those Readings may be restored in any future Impression. I will resume the Subject on some other Occasion; at present let me only mention, that DODSLEY, when he wrote to me last, desired my

Opinion, whether or no he should be thought impertinent if he presented your Ladyship with a complete Set of his Miscellanies. It seems the three first Volumes are out of Print at this Time; but will be reprinted in about a Month: the fourth he gives me Reason to expect every Day.

I am particularly glad to hear that your Health is tolerable, during this rigorous Weather, as it gives me Room to conceive the Advantage you may derive from a better. How do I long for the Approach of Spring! Methinks I could travel Leagues to meet it, were it possible by so doing to bring it faster on its Way: and yet, unless it should supply me with Health, as well as with Company, with Spirits, as well as Spring-Flowers, and in one Word, enliven both the Farmer, and the Farm, what would it avail? The two Canary Birds that were given me about three Weeks ago sing whilst I am writing; sing from Morn to Night, and that with all the Vigour which the Spring itself could inspire; yet I do not half enjoy them; my Mind is not in tune:
the

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the Commencement of my Spring must receive its Date at *Barrels*. I am, with constant Attachment,

Your Ladyship's most obliged

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER LVIII.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. GRAVES.

Dear Mr. GRAVES,

The *Leasowes*,
March 21, 1755.

PARDON the Arrival of this one more Letter without a Frank; I have sent some Covers to my Lord of *D—*, who is down, and shall probably enough receive them before I write again.

There is nothing that I can less forgive the World than your Want of Leisure. Do not misinterpret me, or take amiss what I say. I know you to be infinitely more happy than

Q 2

myself,

myself, who am cloyed with it: but it would add something to my Happiness, if not to your own, that you had more vacant Spaces or Intervals of Time to employ in those refined Amusements, for which you are so exquisitely qualified.

I am in doubt, whether I should add Mottos to my Seal, or not rather cause the Circumference, which at present is rather of the largest, to be contracted. Should you have struck out any Thing since you wrote to me, you will be so good as to let me know.

As to Sun-Dials, I never much affected the Things themselves, nor indeed any Mottos with which I have seen them inscribed; perhaps this Indifference may arise from no very commendable Sources, a Reflection upon my own Want of Proficiency in Mathematics, and an habitual Consciousness of my own Waste of Time. However, I have often had Thoughts of placing a slight one somewhere upon my Premises, for the Sake of inscribing it with a Couple of Lines from VIRGIL:

Sed

*Sed fugit interea fugit, irreparabile tempus,
Singula dum capti circumveſlamur amore.**

All the Lines in VIRGIL afford me that Sort of Pleasure which one receives from melancholy Music; and I believe I am often struck with the Turn and Harmony of his Expression, where a Person less attached to these can discover no great Beauty.

I told you, how much I was vexed that DODSLEY did not suffer me to avail myself of the Time that passed from the Correction of the Proof-Sheets to the Publication of his Book. He has at last sent me a Copy, which I received last *Thursday* Se'en-night. I wish the last Stanza of WHISTLER's Verses upon Flowers had remained as he himself wrote it: but being somewhat dissatisfied with the original Reading, and having no Time left to improve it myself, I left it to D—, who I think has made it worse; however, in this Respect, and some others, it may be proper to

* I M I T A T E D.

Meantime the Hours, th' irreparable Hours,
Wing their swift Flight, while Streams, and rural Bow'rs,
And Love engage the Mind.

fix one's Eye upon a subsequent Impression; and DODSLEY has acted as discreetly as it was possible for him to do, considering what Instructions were given him, and how *much* was left to his Discretion. Our Contributions may be said to begin with Mr. SOMERVILLE's *Address*, &c. Page 302; amongst which he has inserted two Odes (Page 305 and 307) to which I am a Stranger. The Song marked J. S. H. is my Neighbour Mr. H—'s, who has a pretty Collection of Drawings, Petrefactions, and Coins. The *Lady of Quality* you know; and as to all the Pieces that follow, you know the Authors of them as well as I do. I will not anticipate your own Observations; but I cannot help remarking that MILTON's *Il Penseroso* has drove half our Poets crazy: it has, however, produced some admirable Odes to *Fancy*, amongst which, that of WHARTON (not in this Volume) I think deserves the Preference; and after his, MERRICK's, PENSHURST, and the Ode on *Solitude* are of the same Tribe, and are good. The *Pleasures of Melancholy*, and MARIOTT's Ode to *Fancy*, of the same Tribe, are indifferent. There is nothing I am more pleased with, than Father FRANCIS's Prayer,

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MRS. BERKLEY repeated it to me in my Root-House this last Summer, and, I think, said it was Mr. WEST's. I could wish I had made you some Compliments in this Volume, for particular Reasons, and had resolutely done so, had your own Diffidence permitted me.

I have now and then some Thoughts of printing that *Ode to the Duchess*, together with something sufficient to make a twelve or an eighteen-penny Pamphlet, about the Time the Parliament rises; but not unless it sits till *June* as was reported, and not unless you will promise me the Favour of your Assistance.

'Tis the Property of great Delicacy, to be often-times too diffident; possibly then you may not long persevere in that Manner of spelling your Name, which you seem at present to prefer; yet is nothing so clear to me, as that yourself and your Relations should spell their Name GREAVES to the End of the World—*Nati Natorum & qui nascentur ab illis.**

* Grandsons, great Grandsons, and all your Posterity.

COWPER's Performance is all that you think it: but would you see both his Style and Sentiments effectually demolished, look into the Account of Books in that *Gentleman's Magazine* where it was first advertised.

You will guess that I shall want impatiently to hear from you, when you have received your Set of Books, or perused them elsewhere.

I am,

ever-more affectionately yours,

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER LIX.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. B—.

Dear Mr. B—, The *Leasowes*, Oct. 1755.

THE affectionate Letter I received from you ought to have been answered by the next Post; it had been so, if I had pursued the Dictates of a Heart, I will not say, altogether

together happy in our Reconciliation, but more properly in the Manifestation of our ever-undivided Friendship. I have had a large Conflux of Visitants this Summer, and the Diffipation they have occasioned me, was for the most Part very agreeable. But it must not be by any Accession of *Pleasure*, that I attempt to excuse my unseasonable Neglect of writing; for Pleasure I have in writing to my Friends, when my Mind is free from Anxiety, and that Pleasure connected with a Duty I owe to Friendship, superior to what is claimable by any mere Visitant or Acquaintance; yet I cannot but confess the Change which a very few Years have wrought in me; for surely it is not long since I wearied you, and the rest of my Correspondents, with my *Affiduity*; where I now write *one* Letter, I then wrote *twenty*: mean while, the Warmth of my Heart is not diminished, with regard to Friendship; I know it from the Pleasure which the Receipt of your Letter gave me. Of this Kind are the only Pleasures which accompany us through Life; they encrease upon Repetition, and grow more lively from Indulgence. “*Vient l'Appetit en mangeant,*” was, I think, an Answer made
by

by a *French* Courtier to his Sovereign, when it was objected to him by the latter, that there was no End of his Importunities. But whatever odd Instances may be found of a perverted Appetite, the Maxim is only universal, in regard to social Pleasure. The Case is not the same, with regard to Pleasures of Sense; it is not so even with regard to Pleasures of Imagination. Accordingly, though I first embellished my Farm, with an Eye to the Satisfaction I should receive from its Beauty, I am now grown dependent upon the Friends it brings me, for the principal Enjoyment it affords; I am pleased to find them pleased, and enjoy its Beauties by Reflection. And thus the durable Part of my Pleasure appears to be, at the last, of the social Kind.

With much Willingness would I have waited upon your Friend Colonel C— this Year, but for the perplexing Law-Suit in which I am involved with young D—. It has made me rude to my Superiors, deaf to all inviting Offers, and neglectful, at once, to my old Friends and my new. Pray make my Compliments to him, and assure him how sensible I am of the Honour

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Honour he has done me. Another Year, if I live, will, I hope, make me some Amends for this, by affording me an Opportunity of waiting upon him and you.

Pray also make my Compliments to Mr. and Mrs. P—, and Dr. C—, and my Peace with the A—n Family, or any other where you visit, that may mistake Necessity for Disrespect. Above all, recommend me to Mrs. B— in the best Manner you are able, which, I take it, is by assuring her, that I ever have been, and am, and will be while I live,

Dear Mr. B—,

your affectionate Friend,

W. SHENSTONE.

L E T.

LETTER LX.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. S—.

Dear S—, The *Leasowes*, Aug. 24, 1756.

I AM truly glad to hear of your Reception with our worthy Admiral, to whom I will take the first Occasion of conveying my Acknowledgments. It is not quite clear from your Letter, whether you are Mate or Midshipman; but whatever your Post may be, I hope, and make no Doubt, that you will endeavour to fill it as becomes you. Should you happen to be continued in the Admiral's own Ship, you will have the Honour to serve more immediately under the most generous Man alive; whose Penetration will not suffer any Degree of Merit to escape his Notice, and who will allow yours the more Consideration, on Account of his Regard for me. As the best Means, therefore, of promoting your Interest, you will need to concern yourself little further, than to deserve well; and this by an
uniform

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uniform Course of Diligence and Sobriety, by the strictest Attention to Honour and your Duty, and by a Conduct entirely free from all Artifice and Disguise. You have an honest, open Countenance; I do not in the least question that you will verify it in your Behaviour; neither do I drop *any* of these Hints, as though I mistrusted your Conduct; I do unfeignedly believe them to be every one superfluous: however, it may prove a Satisfaction for you to reflect, that the Temper, which I trust is natural to you, is what I think most likely to recommend you to the Admiral. And be assured, that you shall acquire no Reputation in the Service, which shall not be seconded by all the Interest and good Offices of your affectionate Kinsman,

W. SHENSTONE.

L E T-

LETTER LXI.

Mr. SP— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

My dear Sir, D—, Aug. 19, 1758.

AFTER a Journey of above a Month, is it not very reasonable to allow a Man of my Age, a Month to rest himself? I have been here indeed so long; but Visits, and returning Visits, and Business, have prevented most of it from being a Time of Rest. I am now set down to writing Letters, which I verily believe will take up another Month, for, on casting up my Accounts of that Kind, I found myself no less than forty-seven in Debt; a Number, for which I am sure you must pity me.

I don't know how to thank you enough, for all the Pleasure we had during the Week we were at the *Leasowes*. I have talked of it every Day since, and dream of it a-nights. If you loved travelling as well as I do, I should

cer-

certainly beseech you to come and stay a Month or two here at *Durham*; and I should be the more encouraged to do so, because our Friend Mr. DODSLEY left us quite in love with the Place; (I don't mean the Town itself, but the Walks about it.) Indeed, if Wood, and Water, and Wildness, are the Things that make a Place agreeable, we are as much obliged to Nature here, and more, than any Town I have ever seen, either at Home or abroad.

My Obligations to you are not confined to *Shropshire*, and your delightful Paradise in it; but spread through all the Counties that we passed; and increased, when we had Time to set down here, from your Works of another Kind; they often gave me the greatest Pleasure, not only from their Spirit and Elegance, but from the good Heart that shines forth throughout them. Whatever Excellencies a Writer possesses, and to whatever Degree, this is the true Sun, that gives the noblest gilding of all to his Compositions; and you must give me leave to say, that you are the most sun-shiny Writer of this Kind that ever warmed me.

If

If, in the first Month that you can't walk abroad, you would favour me with the natural History, how, and why, and in what Order, you laid out every Part of your Gardens, it would not only be a Continuation of the Pleasure you have given me ever since I saw you, but would be, I dare say, of particular Use to me, as a Guide and Assistant in many Things, and particularly in those two great Articles of Vistas and Cascades. What I wrote down, was a mere Skeleton of the Ground, and was only intended to enable me to take all the Round of it, whenever I should want to do so, in my Imagination; but what I would beg of you, is, a more lively Account of a Place, that is so much mine and every Body's Favourite.

I went from you to *Scotland*, as I fear too many People do, with an Expectation of scarce seeing any Thing there worth seeing: but after passing above one hundred Miles of it, through bad Roads, over Mountains, by Cottages composed of Dirt, and a barren, bleak Country, we were very agreeably surpris'd, on our Approach toward

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toward *Edinburgh*, to find ourselves in an open Country, well cultivated, and in a noble View, that struck us with double Pleasure, from our being used so long to see almost nothing but what was displeasing. When you have coasted the *Pentland* Hills, and get upon a Rising, you see the City all at once, spread in a Line before you, with the Castle to the right, the Palace and a Rock (the middle Part of which is called ARTHUR'S Seat) to the left; and a vast Bason of Water (the Frith of *Forth*) appearing from behind it; the Country near is varied with little Swells and Risings, and studded with Villas; the Land spreads on with a chearful and cultivated Look, and the whole is terminated with a long Range of Hills, that grow dimmer and ruder, quite on to those of the Highlands. You may a little conceive of what an Extent this View must be, when I assure you, that the Bason of Water about the Middle of it does not appear at all over-proportioned, and yet we were assured, that it was sixty Miles long, about thirty in the broadest Part, and fifteen in its opening to the Sea. I could say much more of this same *Edinburgh*, but I have been already rather too diffusive.

VOL. I.

R

When

When you see Mr. BASKERVILLE, I beg my Compliments to him, and all the good Family. May you long enjoy the delicious Spot you live in; and may you always look upon me as a faithful Friend, and one of

your most affectionate

humble Servants,

J— S—

P. S. Could you send me a Receipt how to build a Root House? In my wild Abbey-Grounds, I have a Place that asks for one loudly; but we have neither any Gentleman or Artist here, who understands any Thing of that Stile of Architecture.

Secondly, I hope you won't forget your Promise of a Visit to me at *B—* next *May*.

Thirdly, Mr. DODSLEY told me, you desired me to mark any Thing that I thought suspicious in your Elegies; and wherever I
had

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had the least Feeling of any such Thing in my Mind, I have writ it down, without much Reason, but with great Honesty. I beg you would look upon them only as Queries, and not as Assertions.

LETTER LXII.

Mr. W— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Sir, *Covent-Garden, Jan. 31, 1759.*

BEING gone for a few Days to *Hampton-Court*, I did not receive the Favour of yours so soon as you might naturally imagine, consequently it was not in my Power to write to you by the returning Post; and ever since being full of Employment, I deferred that Pleasure till the present Moment, which I fear will produce little worth your Attention; however, such as it is I give unto you.

In going to *Hampton-Court*, I met with little or nothing curious or entertaining, as indeed mere Motion and Horse-Language are Subjects that afford no great Matter for Narrative. As to the Place, it is a flat, but very pleasant, and has the Advantage of being always dry. The Palace has externally little to recommend it besides Bulk, and in this Respect, it would excite the Admiration of my Friend Dr. A—, who would call it a *noble* Pile. There are many grand Rooms within, and some fine Paintings; but the Method of shewing such Places would not allow me much Time to examine them. The Gardens are all in the *Dutch* Taste, with Ever-greens and strait Canals, and some fine Brass Statues interspersed; there is a Terrass by the Side of the *Thames* a great Length, with a Wall on one Side, and Iron Pallisades on the other, which, from the Quantity of Iron and the Workmanship, will deserve the Approbation of those who deal in that Manufacture, but I think their least Merit is in the Place they occupy. I took several Walks round about, and the Number of Gentlemen's Seats and neat Villages in the Neighbourhood make it a desirable Situation. Mr. GARRICK has built at

Hampton a Rotund Temple, in Honour of SHAKESPEARE, but I could not have an Opportunity of seeing the Inside of it. The Morning I was to go to *London*, the Stage was full, therefore being very dry and pleasant, I walked to Town; but taking Cold that Night afterwards at the Play, I was laid up for a Week. On my Return to *Covent-Garden*, I found, besides your Letter, a Card from Mr. D—; I waited on him the next Morning, but had not the Pleasure to find him at Home; he has since, however, been so obliging as to call on me, when I told him your Request, which he promised to gratify. He was to have dined with the Mr. K—s and me on *Sunday* last, but sent us Word, he had that Morning lost some Blood. Mr. K— promises to write to you soon; he gave me some of Mr. P—'s Subscriptions, which I make no Doubt but I shall dispose of as soon as I go abroad; for not having a single Article of Mourning by me, I am obliged to buy all new, and my Taylor is a Man of such Consequence, that I have not been able to obtain the Favour of mine from his Hands yet.

I have not seen Mr. DODSLEY some Time; I intend him a Visit soon. I have not met yet with an *Antinous*. Mr. K— and I shall some Morning scrutinize all the Shops in Town. It is very odd, that not many Nights ago, I dreamt somebody had made you a Present of one; if that should happen to be the Case hereafter, I shall have more Faith in Dreams than ever I had before.

All public Diversions were stopped for a Week on the Death of the Prince of ORANGE; how the Town so long subsisted without, and what new Amusement served to kill Time, would be a Subject well worth knowing. There has been a successful Method thought of to tax Curiosity these last three Weeks, with the Sight a famous *Mohawk* Warrior, armed with his Scalping Knife, Battle Axe, &c. and painted in the *Indian* Manner for War: his Body is stained Mahogany, but his Face is made most terrific by the Hand of some Sign-Post APPELLES; in his Cheeks, the Red is very predominant; his Eye-Brows owe their Breadth and Colour to a thick *Stratum* of Lamp-black, and his Nose is not less

less remarkable for a large Line of fable. He goes through his Exercise with great Expedition; performs the War Dance and Whoop, which is a Noise unheard in this Part of the World before: all this is very fine, exceeding curious, &c. but will not you laugh when I tell you who this formidable Hero is, *Ecce iterum Crispinus!* Mr. FOOTE, and no less a Man; if 'tis not him *in propria personâ*, it is one of his Agents; 'tis certain it is no *Indien*; if it was, he could not bear Confinement: another Circumstance, Mr. FOOTE is missing, and has not been seen since the Arrival of this *Mohawk*, which gives strong Proof to suspect him; however, be who he will, he is a clever Fellow, and has got a great deal of Money. To-morrow Night a new Farce is to be acted at *Drury-Lane*, for the Benefit of Mr. S—, who has been some Time confined in *Luke's* Hospital.

Mr. G— B— is just come from *Bath*, where he left Mrs. P— in high Spirits, and Mr. and Mrs. B—; Mr. P— is gone into *Warwickshire*, to attend a Law-Suit; somebody having laid Claim to a Part of his Estate, which his Fa-

mily have had uninterrupted Possession of, for above fifty Years.

Your State of one Day's Account is, I must confess, very natural, and too often true, particularly in some Articles; in return for it, I am promised by some Gentlemen of my Acquaintance, a true State of their Expences one Day, which, from the Manner of the Men and Way of Life, cannot fail of being extraordinary. Some Choice Spirits, to the Number of five and twenty, agreed to dine at WHITE'S; and the Orders were, Get a Dinner as expensive as you can possibly make it; which was punctually performed, and, to their great Surprise and Mortification, found that the most luxuriant Dinner amounted to no more than ten Pounds a Man! This Experiment served to convince them, that eating was a *mean, paltry* Enjoyment, and only fit for Cits and Aldermen, to whom they left it, because it cost so *little*, and therefore confessed the Supremacy of Gaming, which they embraced as their *Summum Bonum*, for the contrary Reason.

Mr.

Mr. BURKE'S Treatise on the *Sublime and Beautiful* I read almost two Years ago, in his first Edition: the Pleasure I received from the Perusal, will make me embrace the first Opportunity I have of reading the second—*Quære*, whether Lady COVENTRY corresponds with his Idea of Beautiful? The Study of Physic certainly will produce in us Admiration; because when we trace the Mechanism of Nature philosophically, as in the human Body, it becomes an Object of the Sublime; every Step we take in such Researches, fills us with amazing Instances of Wisdom and Contrivance: but in the living Body, Nature there conceals her Machinery, and presents to our Eyes a smooth Object, whose external Figure is moulded with such inimitable Harmony, such an insensible and pleasing Variation from the right Line, together with such a Delicacy and Transparency in the Skin, that it cannot fail of exciting our Ideas of Beauty, which as *they* tend to relax the Solids, will refine them into those of Love. *Quære* then, if that Love may not receive additional Force in the Breast of an Anatomist,

from

from his previous Acquaintance with the internal Springs and Structure of such an Object, and thereby the better qualified to judge of the Beauty of the whole? In other Words, may not his Admiration, co-operating with his Love, make him a more sensible and feeling Observer? *Argol*, the Study of Physic may be said (if not to produce) to heighten Love. I submit it to your Decision; for who can paint Nature, must have *felt*, and who has *felt* is the best Judge.

I did not understand you literally, that you meant what you wrote: but as I am, beyond what many may conceive, taken up every Hour of the Day, I intended my Insinuation of my Industry as a Plea for any seeming Neglect I might be guilty of towards my Friends, in not writing to them so punctually as I could wish; for I have known it a Maxim with many, that no People had so much leisure Time as those who lived in *London*. But let it not discourage the Oracle; let him deal out with as liberal a Hand as he pleases, mysterious Truths, and they shall be applied to form
the

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the Conduct of one who has the Happiness
to subscribe himself

his most affectionate Friend and Servant,

F. W—.

LETTER LXIII.

Mr. H— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear SIR,

Feb. 13, 1759.

I Received the Tobacco-Stopper, which my
Friend Mr. PERCY bought at MOODY'S
Shop, and also the Letter, to authenticate its
being made of the Tree he mentioned. I am
also pretty well assured of the Truth thereof,
having lately seen Mr. HOBBS of *Birmingham*.
who informs me, that he has a Piece of the
same Tree, which he brought from *Stratford*,
in his Possession. I think the Wood much
too spungy to carve neatly on it, else should
like

like to improve a Hint that Mr. HOBBS gave me, of having a Cup or little Bowl, with some particular Scene out of one of SHAKESPEARE's favourite Plays carved thereon; however, if you will get him to procure (but not at an extravagant Rate) any, or what he can of the said Mulberry-Tree, I will have something made of it, as shall make it advantageous to him for undertaking the same, if he pleases. I have Coins of most Sorts, both *English* and foreign, and some of JAMES the First, therefore do not want what seems to me to be imperfect: however, if that he mentions was really dug up near the Tree in SHAKESPEARE's Garden, I shall be glad to give a small Matter more than the Weight for it, and Mr. HODGETTS, will pay for the same.

I will not apologize for applying to you on this whimsical Occasion, as I have no other Connections about your Part of the World, by which I could procure such a Memorial of our distinguished Bard. When I am so happy as to be the Subject of your Pen next, be so good as to give me your Thoughts on this Kind of *Curiosity*, (or whatsoever else
you

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you please to call it) which induces us to pay a *Price* for a Morfel of a Tree, planted (as Report fays) by SHAKESPEARE's own Hand; and how far you think fuch a Paſſion allowable, or (to frame a Word nearer my Meaning) *indulgeable*. I am, dear Sir,

your very affectionate,

J. S. H.

LETTER LXIV.

W. SHENSTONE, Eſq. to Mr. DODSLEY.

Dear Mr. DODSLEY, *March 31, 1759.*

I AM afraid you think me negligent: know then that I fat down laſt *Thursday*, to write you a long Letter, about ſeven o'Clock at Night, when I diſcovered that the Poſt went out at that very Hour I fat down to write. I had immediate Recourſe to ſuch Conſolation

solation as the Case admitted; and supposed a Letter received on *Monday* Morning, might do near as well as one on *Saturday* Night, considering that *Sunday* intervened, which must be a leisure Day, *even* for *Printers*. But in good Earnest now, do you *think* me lazy? Or have not you, under your present *Dissipation*, an *heavier* Complaint against my *Diligence*? You and I shall hardly agree about the *Means* of *estimating* Letters; you, conscious of your own Genius, are desirous to value them by their *Weight*; while I, conscious of my late *Industry*, would fix their Value by the Number of *Words*. What Pretensions, pray, can you suggest, for so very *perverse* a Manner of Reckoning? Is not *Industry* a *moral Virtue*? And are not many written Words a *Proof* of *Industry*? But though your *Ingenuity* be even a Miracle, you will hardly prove it to be a *moral Virtue*, unless, indeed, in the *Way* you manage it; and so, all your Faculties are moral Virtues: however, we less *artful*, or less *heroick* Personages, must magnify the Virtues that we *have*; of these, *Industry* is one, though perhaps *this* had been scarce allowed me, till within these three or four Months

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Months past. I say, that we, who are the *Animæ nil magnæ Laudis egentes* ; * we, the *Animæ viles, inhumata infletaque turba* : † In other Words, the *Numerus*, ‡ and the “ *nati Fruges consumere* ;” if we would appear considerable, pray what Method can we take? I know, indeed, but two ; the one of disparaging *your* Abilities, which is not quite so feasible ; the other, of taking all occasion to magnify our own good Qualities. If then, Industry be a Virtue, I am possessed of it very remarkably : Not a Moment of my Time passes, but I am employed, either in overseeing Labourers ; reading ROBINSON’S *History of Scotland* ; writing in my Paper Books, (’tis not material *what*, but writing ;) perplexing the *Birmingham* Artists with Sketches for Improvements in their Manufactures, which they *will* not understand ; and lastly, and finally, feeding my Poultry, my Ducks, my Pigeons, and my Swans ; which last give me as much Pleasure, as what I had before gave me Vexation. No inconsiderable Pane-

* “ Souls little desirous of Praise.”

† Low Souls—an unburied, and unlamented Multitude.

‡ The Crowd, born to consume the Produce of the Ground. .

gyrick,

gyrick, I'll assure you! And surely this is not only *Industry*, but an *Industry* of a *better Kind* than what employs the *Animæ viles* of a Drawing-room. And now this *last Instance* of my great *Industry* puts me in Mind of asking you a Question:

Pray now, you that are a Mythologist, what an absurd Man you are, not to jump at an Invitation to come directly to the *Leasowes*? Here am I, (like your Friend *Æsop*, before *OGILBY's Fables*; or like *ADAM*, in our old *Bibles*) sitting once or twice a Day with every created Animal before me. Is not this the only Residence for a Person that is writing Fables? 'Tis true, this very Person may contemplate better in a *Crowd*, than another in the Depth of Solitude: you may far surpass me, who thus converse with *Birds*, while he describes a Sparrow from *Pall-Mall*, or a King-fisher from *Charing-Cross*: but *Imagination* is a prodigious *Heightener*; and unless he paints them from Life, may he not attribute to a *King-fisher* much finer Feathers than he in Truth possesses? Pray take the Opinion of Mr. SPENCE—How I blush, while I recollect that Name!

And

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And yet, were it not for my *own* Omissions, it must revive *only* my most *favourite* Ideas. Surely 'tis written in the Book of Fate, that I shall discharge my Debt within a Post or two; for Fate evidently enough interferes, or I could never have been so long silent. I am almost ashamed to desire my humble Respects to him, and yet it is impossible for me to suppress my Feelings.

I must now proceed to Business. Past six o'Clock once more; but the Post now goes out at ten. If you *can* procure me the quarto Cuts for MILTON, it will be a very desirable Favour.

Mr. BOND has made some Alteration in your *Grove*, which I thought very pretty on its *Arrival*; yet, perhaps, he may be right enough, if Mr. GRIGNION can comprehend his Meaning. The Trees he means *on the wrong Side the Water*, are some of those opposite to the Letter S, which I have put upon the Back: but I am fearful of *spoiling*; and must beg Mr. GRIGNION would re-compare the Print with Mr. BOND's original Drawing, then retouch his

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Plate, and let me have a few more Proof-Sheets of both the Prints. Give me one or two Lines by *Return* of Post, if possible.

No Books ready? I want MALLET's Works, bound in *Russia* Leather, and lettered on Green. Pray excuse this last vile Page. I have wasted my Time, and now am utterly at a Fault for it.

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER LXV.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Dr. PERCY.

Dear SIR,

The *Leasowes*,
June 6, 1759.

IT is, perhaps, no uncommon Case for the Magnitude of a Debt to prevent, or at least retard every Step toward a Discharge. In Truth, the many Favours you have conferred upon me by the Packet I have received
for

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for *E*—, have made me ashamed of such a partial Payment, as my Health and Leisure would permit; when I complain of Health, I mean no other than a Kind of Drowsihead and Lensor which has somewhat infested me at this Season; perhaps it were better expressed by that disreputable Name, Stupidity: be that, however, as it may, it is by this chiefly, I have been disqualified from those refined Sorts of Amusement, in which your Letters and Packets required me to engage.

I have been expected to pass a Week at *Shiffnal*, ever since the Beginning of *May*, where I was by particular Appointment to meet our Friend Mr. BINNEL. The Visit is not laid aside, but will probably take Place in about a Fortnight's Time or less. One Pleasure I expect from it, beside what I shall reap from Mr. PITT and Mr. SLANEY's Company, and that turns upon the Opportunity it will afford me of perusing your OVID in Conjunction with Mr. BINNEL; and it has been with this View, in some Measure, that I have deferred the Examination you desired me to bestow upon it. In general, I would

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with you to make it as just to the Author's Sense, and to your own Sentiments, as you can, and afterwards consider me as a mere Music Master, whom you would employ to tune your Harpsichord; in other Words, as a proper Person to retrench any little Encroachments upon Simplicity, Ease of Style, or Harmony.

I want to communicate many Things; but must defer most of them till I see you. And pray let Mrs. PERCY know me for one of your peculiar Friends, and then I hope she will not scruple to reward me with an irregular Visit, by Way of Distinction. I brought my Friend JAGO's new Bride to pay me that Compliment the other Day.

Mr. DODSLEY in his last Letter desired, I would present you with his new Edition of *Cleone*, which is the only one you should preserve. It is, according to my best Calculation, improved in about an hundred Places merely, and altered in about six. I will either keep it till you come, or send it to you, if you will shew me *how*.

I had

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I had retouched and transcribed both the *Gentle Herdsman* and *Edom of Gordon*,* long before your Letter arrived. Your supplemental Stanzas must undoubtedly approach nearer to what was the original Reading, than those which I have substituted, and which I will not send you now, because I will multiply your Inducements to visit my Place in the proper Season.

You must by all Means read Dr. YOUNGE's *New Conjectures on original Composition*; and let it deter you, when you have compleated OVID, from engaging in any more Translations. I have also read the Essay on the present State of Learning, written by a Dr. GOLDSMITH, whom you know, and whom such as read it will desire to know. LA MOTTE also has afforded me no little Entertainment: I read it on Account of DODSLEY, who you may remember is writing Fables, and who has requested me to send him my Thoughts upon the Subject.

* Two Pieces in Dr. PERCY's *Collection of Ancient Poetry*.

LETTER LXVI.*

— — to Mr. DOPSLEY, at the *Leasowes*.

Dear Sir,

July 28, 1759.

I Finished my Peregrinations the Day before you began yours; for the Day after my Arrival at this Place, I called at your Lodgings, and was informed you set off that very Morning for Mr. SHENSTONE's. I have often thought you, in many Respects, a Man to be envied; but in your present Situation, you are in Possession of a Happiness too great for Mortals; enjoying in one of the hottest Seasons that ever was known in *England*, the Shade and Coolness of the finest Groves perhaps in the World, rendered still more enchanting by the Conversation of one of the best Poets, as well as one of the worthiest Men of the Age. A certain Monarch of old

* The liberal and just Mention made in this Letter, of Mr. SHENSTONE and Mr. DODSLEY, will (the Editor presumes) be a sufficient Justification for having retained it.

broke

broke off all Connexion and Alliance with a Brother King in *Greece*, for no other Reason, but because the other experienced an uncommon Share of Felicity. If his Example deserved to be followed, you are the Man of all others, whose Friendship I would renounce. But the Truth is, you cannot have more Happiness than I wish you; nor more, I am persuaded, than you deserve; and therefore, I will e'en be contented to hold on my Amity with you, till I have a better Reason for parting with it, which I am very sure I shall never be furnished with.

With Respect to my own Travels, I have little to say worth relating. Finding my Health not equal to so long a Journey as to *Scarborough*, and the Weather at the same Time proving extremely cold and wet, I turned out of the high Road at *Newark*, and crossed the Country to *Nottingham*. As I found the Air of the Place agree with me, and likewise met with an old Friend, who lives like a true *Arcadian*, in a little rural Cottage, at a short Distance from the Town, I continued there till my Return hither. I saw every Thing in the Neigh-

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bourhood worth looking at; but what pleased me most was Lord BYRON's Abbey upon the Forest, which without Doubt you have visited. Adieu, dear Sir.

I am
you faithful and affectionate humble Servant,

— —.

LETTER LXVII.

MR. DODSLEY to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Sir,

O^r. 12, 1759.

WHAT Apology can I make for not writing to you now for more than a Month, after receiving so much Pleasure and so many Civilities? However, as you too well know how easy it is for such Things to happen, I will make none, but leave you to *forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us.* And this would lead me to expostulate with you for not coming

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to *Batb*: but I forbear, having many Things to be pardoned in myself, as well as many to deliver to you, and therefore so much for Apology.

I have seen *Persfield*, Mr. MORRIS's Seat; and Mr. SPENCE was just come from seeing it, when he arrived at *Batb*: he is much struck with it, and has attempted somewhat towards a Description of it. I shall have a Copy of his Papers soon, and will transmit it to you. The Place is certainly of the great and sublime Kind; most of the near Views are seen below you from the Top of high Precipices, consisting of steep Rocks, hanging Woods, the Rivers *Severn* and *Wye*, which last winds about the Feet of the Rocks below you, in a very romantic Manner, almost surrounding a very pretty Farm, where Cattle and Sheep are feeding in the Meadows, at such a Depth below your Eye, that they seem very much diminished. The Rocks are bold and numerous, half covered with Woods, and rise almost perpendicular from the Edge of the Water to a surprising Height, forming, from the great Cliff, a Kind of double Amphitheatre. A Gun fired from

from the Top of this Cliff, creates, by the Reverberation of the Report amongst other Rocks, a loud Clap of Thunder, two or three Times repeated, before it dies away : but even this Echo, conformably to the Pride and Grandeur of the Rest of the Place, will not deign to answer a smaller Voice than that of a Musket ; with a Culverin, I suppose, it would hold a noble Dialogue. The Town of *Chepstow*, and its ruined Castle, appear in the near View at somewhat more than the Distance of *Hales Owen* from your Grove ; and the romantic Windings of the *Wye* are seen all the Way to them, except now and then that its Stream is hid among the Rocks ; and all the Way below them, till it is swallowed up by the *Severn*, at about two miles Distance, where that River is also near two Miles over, and from whence it extends, enlarging in Breadth, quite down to *King-Road*, below *Bristol*. I can conceive nothing finer than these Views would be, were the Waters of the Rivers as clear as that of the *Thames* : but, alas ! they are so muddy, that they will scarce return the Images of the Rocks, Trees, and other Objects, that rise upon their Banks. The distant Views are very extensive,

tenfive, and lets the Eye into Parts of fourteen different Counties. The Extent of the Walks is near four Miles, which in about five Hours Time I made shift to accomplish. I went from *Bath* with a polite Party of Gentlemen and Ladies, and our three Days Excursion was altogether exceedingly agreeable.*

Dr.

* I am this Instant favoured with a more particular Description of the Scenes and Views I have attempted to describe, and for your better understanding the Situation of them, have copied them. First you enter the serpentine Walks, (which are near four Miles and a Half in length) from *Chepstow*, and the

I. View, the Town,

II. The Sea and the Rocks,

III. The two Passages over the *Severn*, from *England* to *Wales*, where the Passage-Boats are continually passing and re-passing,

IV.	} Three Avenues from	{ <i>Chepstow</i> ,		
V.			} which are seen	{ The Church,
VI.				

VII. A confined View of the Rocks and Channel.

VIII. A Balcony, from whence are beautiful Views of the River *Wye*, and its Windings, the Rocks, Woods, &c. &c. beyond Description.

IX.

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Dr. L— has favoured me with six new Fables, which are very clever and ingenious. Poor Mr. M— has been so ill, that he has done but one. I have written one myself, since I came Home; the *Butterfly, Snail, and Bee*: and one Mr. G— gave me, the *Tube-Rose and Sun-Flower*: the two last I send you enclosed. So that if you will favour me with half a Dozen, I shall

IX. A Seat; the View, the Woods continued.

X. A *Chinese* Bridge; a pretty confined Prospect.

XI. A large Oak, with Ivy, and two Seats under it.

XII. A beautiful Green by the Wood.

XIII. A Seat under two Oaks.

XIV. A delightful Shrubbery.

XV. A Cave of Stone and Pebbles, with an extensive Prospect.

XVI. The Top of the Mount, with the Prospect of seven Counties, the Sea, the Rocks, *Berkley* Castle, the Shipping, &c. &c.

XVII. A Mew for Pheasants, with Shrubberies of the finest foreign Shrubs.

XVIII.

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I shall have got my Number. I will, therefore, now set about writing the Preface and the *Essay on Fable*; and shall be glad to publish this Winter, that I may get them off my Hands, and out of my Head, before I am quite sick of them. Mr. G— was so kind as to read them all over, and gave me several Corrections, and an Imitation of the squeaking Pig from PHÆDRUS. Mr. M— is now employing himself the same Way; and when he

XVIII. A fine Beech Tree, exceedingly large.

XIX. A Druid's Throne and Temple in a *Parterre*.

XX. The Cave where we dined; the opening before it in Form of a Semi-circle, which the Prospect from thence resembles, from whence are seen the Rocks, the Wood, the River, with fine Lawns.

XXI. A *Chinese* Semi-circle; the View, the River, Rocks and Lawns, *Berkley* Castle, and a very extensive Prospect of *Bristol*, &c. &c.

XXII. A Cave, with Iron Rails before it; the View, looking down a Precipice, the most beautiful Woods imaginable.

XXIII. An octagon Temple, surrounded with *Chinese* Rails, from whence is a most extensive Prospect of many Counties, with *Kings-Road*, the Shipping, &c. &c.

has

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has done with them, Dr. L— will go over them again; so that I shall hope they may be 'pretty correct. I shall throw out several of the weakest of my own new ones, and shall endeavour to supply their Places with better.

As you seemed to like the *Madeira*, I shall send by TRIMEN's Waggon, next *Monday*, Carriage paid, four dozen Pints of the same, which beg your Acceptance. Believe me to be ever,

dear Sir,

sincerely and affectionately yours,

R. DODSLEY.

P. S. Mr. SPENCE's Drawing, which I took to be the *Arcadia*, was only a Drawing that he directed to be made at *Rome* for a Lady's Monument in a Garden.

L E T-

LETTER LXVIII.

Mr. DODSLEY to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Mr. SHENSTONE,

Dec. 1, 1759.

I Suppose you have some Time ago received from my Brother the Things you ordered. I desired him to send them, as also the Poems for Mr. WOODHOUSE, to whom I beg my Compliments, and am sorry he had them not sooner, but I had really forgot them. I have been such a Rambler since I came to Town, that I have not had Time to attend to any Thing. I have not written a single Fable since that I sent you, and yet am so unreasonable, as to wonder you have not sent me your half Dozen. I am writing an Essay on Fable, and thinking of a Preface, both of which I shall desire you to take the Trouble of reading and correcting, as soon as I have done them; however, I believe I shall take your Advice, and not think of printing this Winter. I was glad to hear you had some Hopes of finishing your Affairs

Affairs with Mr. D—, and hope they are completed to your Satisfaction. I have been favoured with a Letter from Mr. WREN, which I answer by this Post. You said, my Lord LYTTELTON was to be at the Admiral's till after Christmas, but I saw him pass by in his Chariot a few Days ago. You have given me Hopes of seeing a Survey of your Farm; I beg you will not delay what will give me so much Pleasure: would to God you would bring it yourself, with all your verbal Descriptions, Mottoes, &c. and let them be engraved and printed. I wish I could hear that you was writing somewhat. What think you of an Elegy on the Death of General WOLFE? You know, I suppose that he was to have been married to a Sister of — —, before he went on his last Expedition, but that she desired it might be deferred till his Return. I think the Scene might be laid in her Chamber, on the rejoicing Night for the taking of *Quebec*; her Friends may be supposed to have concealed his Death from her, and her Anxiety for his Welfare, in the Midst of the Rejoicings, might have a fine Effect: when suddenly his Ghost should appear, inform her of his Fate, and endeavour

endeavour to comfort her in her Affliction. Here is Room for Description, Reflection, and the true Pathetic. Such a Story as this in your Hands could not fail to be fine: I wish you to try, and that right soon.

I have searched all the Shops in *London* for a *Pan* proper for the Subject we talked of, but in vain. What think you of the enclosed Sketch? I think it might be mended. Is not the left Hand raised too high?

I had written thus far on *Saturday* Afternoon, when your Letters and Plans arrived by the Penny-Post, which determined me to stay till *Tuesday* before I finished my Letter. You have now embarrassed me; I have so many Things to reply to, that I know not where to begin: I must take them as they lie.

Did I ever tell you of Mr. P—'s *Chinese* Novel? If I did, I have quite forgot it, and will therefore never own it. I shall be very glad to see Mr. H—'s Picture: my Compliments to him, and tell him, I suspect he intends it as a reconciling Present to Miss S—.

I wish Mr. ALCOCK would finish my two Drawings for the Fables; as to my Face, it is a Subject not worth considering; however, I will make you an impudent Proposal: if you will exchange Faces with me when you come up to Town, we will both sit to the same Painter. Notwithstanding you have taken Pains to forfeit all Claim to Favour from Mr. SPENCE, I am very well satisfied, the Letter you promise will effectually cancel all your Offences: I shall go down to him in about a Month, (you see I give you Time enough) enclose it to me, and I will carry it to him, with one of your small Plans, to which I will put References; at the same Time, I will endeavour to get the *Scotch* Paper on Gardening. As to my Sketch of the *Leafowes*, I have not yet had Time to think of it; but as soon as I have finished my Essay, especially if you make it unnecessary for me to write any more Fables, by sending me your half Dozen, I will certainly sit down to it; you see I am willing to make good Bargains. The Ducheſs of SOMERSET'S Letters I have safe, and will send them to you. I am glad Mr. GRAVES is going on; and doubt not but the Work will

will turn to his Advantage. I shall certainly not print the Fables this Winter; and as to the Essay, I hope to have gone through it in about a Fortnight. I have read Dr. HAWKSWORTH'S *Adventurer* on the Subject, in which I exactly agree with you; and I have read a bad Translation of LA MOTTE'S Essay: I know nothing else on the Subject worth reading. When I send you my Essay, I beg you will give it any Improvement which you may think it wants, either in correcting Imperfections, or in supplying Deficiencies. I have got six more new Fables from Dr. L—.

Do not think that I will tamely hear my Friend's *Custard* abused; I shall certainly find a Time to vindicate his Honour, and to make your proud Foreigner own the superior Merit of *English Custard*.

And now for your Plans: I am much obliged to you for sending them; and if I might have my Wish, I would engrave the small coloured one, with Figures of Reference. This should be the Frontispiece to a Pamphlet, which should contain a Description of the Places and Things referred to, somewhat more at large

than they are in this Drawing; together with all your Mottos, Verses, Compliments, &c. as also a verbal Description of the rising and falling of the Ground; the Objects, Prospects, &c. all the Way round. In the Middle of the Title-Page, I would put the last Plate of VIRGIL'S *Grove*; as a Head-piece at the Beginning of the Pamphlet, I would have a Print of your House; and at the End, which should be contrived to be almost a whole Page, I think the chief Cascade might be placed. The Plate should be worked off in Green; the Road through the Path round the House, and the Water, should be afterwards coloured by Hand. Think of these Things; and may Heaven give you Resolution to put them in practice!

I am, dear Sir,

most affectionately yours,

R. DODSLEY.

P. S. Get a Drawing, by BOND; of the great Cascade, and of your House, of a proper

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per Size, and I will be at all other Expence; and if you have any Delicacy about being the Editor of this yourself, I will write a short Preface, and sign my Name to it, in which I will say, that I teized you into it, which is no more than Truth.

Dec. 3.

LETTER LXIX.

Mr. DODSLEY to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Jan. 4, 1760.

HEALTH, Happiness, and all the Compliments of the Season, to dear Mr. SHENSTONE! I have enquired of all the SPILSBURY's in Town, but I cannot find that my little Drawings are yet sent up. This, if Mr. ALCOCK be still with you, I wish you would be so good as to tell him, with my Compliments. When am I to expect an Answer to my last long Letter? And when am I to have your half dozen Fables? I have sent my

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Preface, and my Essay on Fable, to Mr. GRAVES, by this Night's Post, with a Desire, that he will transmit them to you in a Post or two. When you get them, I shall be very glad if you will look them carefully and critically over: they are both very short; and there are blank Pages on one Side, for whatever Alterations or Remarks you shall favour me with. I beg you will be so good as to let me have them back, with your Fables, as soon as possible. I shall not publish this Winter: but I want to have all my Materials together, that I may begin to think of disposing them in the Order they are to stand.

I have Compliments to you from Mr. SPENCE, and he is much obliged to you for the Survey of your Farm. He has never been able to get DALRYMPLE'S *Essay on Garden Grounds*. I enclose a few Lines on the *Leasowes*. If you should think them not totally unworthy of the Subject, I should be glad if you would please to bestow such Correction upon them as you may think will tend to their good. I have other Matters to communicate to you, and to advise with you about; but you have
so

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so much upon your Hands already, from my last Letter and this, that I will not discourage you from sitting down to write to me, by adding at present any Thing further to your Trouble.

I am, dear Sir,

affectionately yours,

R. DODSLEV.

LETTER LXX.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. HULL.

Dear Sir, The *Leasowes*, Jan. 7, 1761.

I AM with you aware, that the Story of the *Spanish Lady* is rather too simple, too destitute of Matter for the Generality of People who frequent the Galleries of a *London Theatre*; but might not some Incidents of Humour be extracted from the Group of Sailors, which must necessarily be introduced in the Piece? There are in real Life various, and very striking Characters among our *English Tars*. In-

T 4

deed,

deed, much Use has been made of them already, and to very pleasing Purposes.

Observe, I propose (or rather merely *allow*) this Violation of the Simplicity of the Story, as a Means to make it answer the Purposes of Emolument to you, if you choose to undertake it; for, as far as relates to my own Taste, I think, even in Representation, it could not be preserved too simple.

The Consideration that an Author is compelled to forego, in many Instances, his favourite Intention, renounce a Compliance with his own Judgment, and even sometimes abolish the very Excellencies of his Genius, to gratify the vitiated Taste of a few noisy Auditors, who otherwise would condemn the Work, is rather melancholy; and could not by any Species of Reason be supported, except that which you advanced, namely, that your Theatres in *London* are maintained in these Days at a very great Expence, and that Expence must be repaid; consequently, if SHAKESPEARE cannot elicit a full House, HARLEQUIN must extort it; but woe the while for the State of
Letters

Letters and Genius !—Such was not the genuine End and Intention of a Theatre. I, for my own Part, look upon it as a Temple raised to *Moral Virtue*; the Design of it is to instruct through the Medium of Delight; to shew Virtue and Vice in their respective Colours: and the Business of the Audience is, to judge, compare, define, to distinguish between what is given for Example, and what for Precaution: so conducted and preserved, a Theatre truly merits the Denomination I have given it; but if *Moral* is to submit to *Matter*, if *fine Sentiment* is to give Way to *fine Scenery*, it falls from the Purposes for which it was originally instituted, and becomes a Place of *Shew* indeed, but not of *Science*,

All these Absurdities and Misfortunes are owing to the Audience; and it is much to be lamented, that the Conductor of an useful Place of Amusement cannot oppose and rectify them; but I clearly see he cannot. Your Anecdote of Mr. GARRICK's laudable Attempt, some Years ago, to remove from public View an annual Object of Indecorum and Immorality, and substitute a Piece, which (however antique) furnished

furnished Matter for the moral HOGARTH to display his Genius on, diverts me much, and would (were I of any Country beside *England*) most probably astonish me. As an *Englishman* it does not. The Attempt was as much to the Credit of Mr. GARRICK, as the Defeat of it was disreputable to the Audience.*

This Subject might, I think, by itself furnish Matter for a tolerably-sized Essay; and I marvel that some Writer, who has rather more Affection for the Use of a Pen than myself, does not adopt it. A Reflection on the very severe Trial a dramatic Writer undergoes, when he offers his Work to the Public, has frequently called forth my Compassion; the Means to procure general Approbation are so vague and precarious, that I almost wonder when I hear of any one hardy enough to stand a Candidate for it.

My Zeal in these Particulars has made me deviate from the principal Object of this Let-

* It had been a Custom at both the royal Theatres, for many Years, to perform the *London Cuckolds* on the Lord-Mayor's Day; Mr. GARRICK, from Motives of Propriety, endeavoured to substitute the old Play of *Eastward-Hoe*; but the Audience exploded it.

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ter, which was to request you to make a little Sketch of my favourite Story upon dramatic Principles, during the Course of this Winter; and let us (*Deo favente*) when next we meet at the *Leasowes*, see how the Design appears. It may be an agreeable Amusement, if it answers no other Purpose.

Whether I may ever execute the Elegy which Mr. DODSLEY has recommended, is very uncertain, though I much approve his Plan. Suppose you were to attempt it—I have some Reasons for thinking that Elegy would suit your Disposition and Abilities. The Mention of DODSLEY's Application * to me has procured me *twelve* Lines, for which I hold myself indebted. You do not tell me who they were written by, so I suppose I am to ask no Questions.

When you get any more such original Morfels, your communicating them will be a Kindness. While I am thus a Winter Solitudinarian, while

* See Letter lxviii. Dec. 1, 1759.

“ Scarce

" Scarce one Friend my Grass-grown Threshold
finds,"

You can hardly conceive how much Value
such Trifles bear.

I am,

dear Mr. HULL,

your very faithful and affectionate,

W. SHENSTONE.

* * * EPITAPH on General WOLFE, alluded to in
the preceding Letter.

With patriot Zeal inspir'd in Youth's first Bloom,
Conquest and Fame adorn'd his early Years ;
Such Fame, such Conquest, as might well become
A *Vet'ran's* Brow, and grace his silver Hairs.

Eager he snatch'd at Glory's highest Palm—
Snatch'd and achiev'd it—Fame exulting bore
Quebec's Defeat, and WOLFE's immortal Name,
Warm from the Field of Blood, to *Albion's* Shore.

America grew pale beneath his Look,
While Justice rear'd her Standard by his Side,
For her and *Britain* his last Blow he strook,
He fought, he bled, he conquer'd and he dy'd.

L E T.

LETTER LXXI.

Miss M— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Bath, July 21, 1760.

SCARCE was I sat down after our agreeable Jaunt, when I was welcomed by my dear Mr. SHENSTONE's polite Favour. You are particularly good in conferring so much Honour on a poor, prattling, insignificant Being like me; yet, however ill I may confess I deserve it in my Ability to repay it, I will venture to affirm, that my Merits, if rated by the Value I set on it, are equal to those of any other wild Female in the Circle of your Acquaintance. But is it come to this? And must I really take Pen in Hand, and describe our little Peregrinations? I must, for you have commanded me. If I even wanted an Inducement beyond your Command, it is at Hand. I mean our common Friend, Mr. HULL. I applied to him for Counsel, and he flatly says, I shall be *rude*, if I decline to obey. Here then, my
good

good Sir, take it in the best Manner I am able to execute a descriptive Letter, and if it is badly done, you must be my Advocate to yourself, for having drawn me into such a Dilemma; in short, your own humane Heart must make Allowances for whatever is unworthy your Judgment.

Be it known unto you then, that last *Wednesday* Morning, we all four (you know our Party) got into a Coach, at six o'Clock, and drove at no slow Rate, for we got to *Bristol* at eight. There we were met by a Gentleman and a Lady from the Hot-well, as wild and as whimsical as ourselves; we are all of a Spinning I can tell you. We just took a Bit of Breakfast at *Bristol*, and then made the best of our Way to *Aust*, the old Passage over to *Wales*; there we dined, and then, after driving a long Way over the Rocks, amongst Sea-Weed, and I can't tell what, with some Difficulty we got into a *Stable*, in which we were to cross the Water—A *Stable*! methinks I hear you say—Why yes, in Truth, good Sir; for pray what can one better compare a Thing to, that was littered from one End to the
 4 other

other with dirty Straw, and filled with as many Horses as People? Oh, we went most sociably over, Horses, Coach, and ourselves, all together: this, however, was the worst of the Bargain, all the best was to come.

When we arrived in *Wales*, we just took a little Refreshment, and then drove to *Chepstow*, remarkable for the great Height of its Bridge, the Tide rising higher by some Degrees there than in any Part of the three Kingdoms. At this Place we were to sleep, so we went to the best Inn to get Accommodations. These secured, we made the best of our Way to *Persfield*, the Seat of Mr. MORRIS; and such a Place, for the Variety and Beauty of its Prospects, I never saw.

The Gardens are seven Miles round, so our poor old Lady was forced to occupy a Seat just by the House, and the rest of us then walked as far as our Legs were able to carry us. We could not compass the whole round, but saw all the principal Prospects. To attempt describing them is impossible, at least to do it with Justice to their Merit, yet, though unequal

unequal to the Task, I must say something. The Gardens are situated on the *Rocks*, I cannot call them the *Banks*, of the River *Wye*, and cut into Walks, in themselves excessively beautiful, but the superior Beauty of the Views they command, so entirely engrosses the Eye, that they can be very little heeded. Sometimes we look down upon the River, from an Eminence of near four hundred Feet, which winds itself round as in a Semi-circle. The opposite Side is bounded by Rocks of equal Height, some barren, and resembling the Ruins of old Fortifications; others covered with the most pleasing Variety of Greens the Eye can wish to behold, while at the Bottom, Cattle are feeding in the sweet Pastures by the River's Side: Cattle, we were told the Creatures were which we saw; but really our Faith had need be strong to believe it, since they appeared to our View more like Hens and Chickens, and I do assure you, one of our Company took them for such.

Here too we saw a Place called the *Lover's-Leap*, it was at the Summit of a Rock full four hundred Feet high from the River, and
I be-

I believe, if used, would be a certain Cure for Love or any other Kind of Trouble. After having delighted our Eyes as long as our Feet would support us, we went back to the reverend Lady; and one of our Company being acquainted with a Lady at Mr. MORRIS's House, we were invited to eat a Bit of Cake and drink a Glass of Wine; this was a most agreeable Repast after our Fatigue, and helped us on very notably. But here, methinks, I hear you say, Alas, the poor old Lady! She saw none of these fine Sights!—Yes, but she did, Sir, as you shall hear: We had a Servant of Mr. MORRIS's to attend our Coach, and he conducted us through various Fields to some Views we had not seen in the Part of the Gardens we walked over, and from these the reverend Dame feasted her Eyes; so you see she came in for a Share of the Show.

We now returned to *Chepstow*, where, after spending as laughable an Evening as could be desired, (I have before told you, we were all of a Spinning) we retired to rest, a Thing not at all unpleasing after the Employment of the Day.

Next Morning we got into a large Boat, with two Pair of Oars, and went up the River *Wye*, to a Place called *Tintern-Abbey*. Here we had the extreme Pleasure of contemplating the most curious Piece of Ruins I ever beheld; I do not believe your *Balbecks* or *Palmiras* can much exceed it. It is the Remains of a Cathedral; all the outside Walls remain so far entire, as to be a Fence to keep People out, but are in a cracked, ruinous State; most of the Pillars on the Inside are standing, though robbed of the fine Carving which adorned them; yet we had some Notion of their former Beauty, from many Pieces tolerably entire, which lay scattered here and there on the Ground. Grass and Wood Strawberries here supply the Place of a Pavement, except in one small Part, where it has not yet been broken. Here is discernible a very pretty Kind of Tile or Stone, the Ground yellow, flowered with black.

The Top of the Church is entirely off, so that Birds build all around in the Pillars and Walls. There are planted a great Variety of Trees in many Parts of the Edifice,
some

some Fruit-Trees: I myself eat three Strawberries I gathered in the Body of the Church. This Place, it seems, was dedicated to the Virgin MARY, and Part of an Image remains, which still bears some Resemblance to her. There is likewise one of an Earl of PEMBROKE, formerly Lord of the Place; that Earl who was surnamed *Strong-Bow*, and as Tradition says, who had five Fingers and two Thumbs on each Hand; one Hand of the monumental Figure is so perfect, that we could distinguish the five Fingers and two Thumbs. In short, I never in my Life saw any Place so well worth visiting of its Kind as this *Tintern-Abbey*, and we were as loath to quit it, as I seem now to be of finishing my wild Description.

Next we went to look at some Iron Works, and saw the Manner of making Bar Iron, and Drawing of Wire. After this we got again into our Boat, to return to *Chepstow*, and as we rowed along the River, had the Pleasure of looking up to those beautiful Rocks we had looked down from, in Mr. MORRIS's Ground. This Reverse of View made a second Enjoyment, and we were more sensible of the

Height of the Mountains in this Situation, than when we were at the Summit of them. So delightful was this Water-Scene, that we all wished a Continuance of it. This put us upon asking the Master of the Boat, if he could safely venture to land us in *England*; he assured us he could, and then it was resolved, *nem. con.* only to stop at *Chepstow* to dine—we did so, and sending our Carriage and Horses to the Passage, to be again taken over in the before-mentioned Stable, we went on board our Boat, and rowed till we got into the *Severn*, and then the Wind favouring us, we had a most charming sail to the opposite Shore. Here we had another Piece of Variety; the River was not deep enough from the Rocks to bring the Boat to dry Ground, nor shallow enough to let the Carriages come to us, so we were all compelled to be carried out on Men's Shoulders.

We drank Tea at the old Passage-House, and then drove to the Hot-well, *Bristol*, but made *King's-Weston-Down* in our Way, which, for the Beauty of its Prospects, could well vie with what we had been seeing in *Wales*. Next Morning our first Route was up to *Clifton*,
where

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where we saw Mr. GOLDNEY's Grotto; of its Kind, to be sure, the most finished Thing; all Description must fail to do it Justice, so let your Imagination form the most regular, elegant, costly Arrangement of Shells it is able, and it can't go beyond the real Beauty.

From a Part of Mr. GOLDNEY's Garden, we had a Prospect I think rather superior to what we saw in *Wales*; it was, if I mistake not, more extensive, commanding a full Scope of the *Severn* losing itself in the Sea, an entire, and uninterrupted View of *Bristol*, and as fine a rural Prospect around, as the Eye could wish to behold,

Are you not, my good Sir, almost weary with reading? I am of writing, I can assure you; and I fear you'll not make out what I have wrote without some Difficulty. But my Ideas of this charming Scene flowed so fast, I could not keep my Pen in any Order, it run on, and I must beg you to take it as it is, for I have not Time to write a fair Copy.

Mr. HULL, I take it for granted, will have the Happiness to deliver this Scrawl of mine, as he sets out for *Warwickshire* to-morrow Morning. He has been endeavouring to persuade us to another Jaunt incontinently, and to let him guide us to the sweetest Retirement in the World, such he calls the *Leasowes*. That Happiness is denied us at present, but I trust will not be always so.

I hope, my good Sir, this implicit Obedience to your Commands, will entitle me to some small Degree of Approbation, and that you will continue to esteem me

Your very faithful humble Servant;

J—M—.

L E T.

LETTER LXXII.*

The Duchess of SOMERSET to Lady LUX-
BOROUGH.

Dear Madam, *Piercy-Lodge, Feb. 25, 1754.*

PRAY never think Excuse can be necessary to me about Exactness in answering my Letters; I am always glad to hear from you when it is agreeable to you to write, but am not one of those over-kind Friends who are for ever out of Humour with those whom they rather enthrall than oblige, by giving them that Name. As a Proof I never wish to act so by my Friends, or am afraid of being treated so by them, I will own to you, I am not quite sure, I should have answered your last Letter so soon, were it not that I am under serious Concern to find how awkwardly I must have expressed myself to Mr. SHENSTONE, if I gave him Room to believe, I harboured a secret Wish to have so fine a Poem as his Ode

* This Letter having been unluckily mislaid, is here inserted erroneously in Point of Date; the Reader will be pleased to observe, it ought to have taken Place, Page 197 in this Volume, immediately preceding Letter LI.

suppressed. On the contrary, I should think myself guilty of a very great Crime and Injustice to the Public, if I were to be the Means of depriving them of so charming and rational an Entertainment. I gave him the true Reasons in my Letter, for desiring that my own Name, nor that of my humble yet peaceful Dwelling, might be inserted. You know I always envied the Lot of "*La Visflette, qui se cache sous l'Herbe.*"

'Tis true, my dear Lady LUXBOROUGH, Times are changed with us, since no Walk was long enough, or Exercise painful enough to hurt us, as we childishly imagined; yet after a Ball or Masquerade, have we not come Home very well contented to pull off our Ornaments and fine Cloaths, in order to go to rest? Such methinks is the Reception we naturally give to the Warnings of our bodily Decays; they seem to undress us by Degrees, to prepare us for a Rest that will refresh us far more powerfully than any Night's Sleep could do. We shall then find no Weariness from the Fatigues which either our Bodies or our Minds have undergone; but all Tears shall be wiped from our
Eyes,

Eyes, and Sorrow, and Crying, and Pains, shall be no more; we shall then without Weariness move in our new Vehicles, transport ourselves from one Part of the Skies to another, with much more Ease and Velocity, than we could have done in the Prime of our Strength, upon the fleetest Horses, the Distance of a Mile. This chearful Prospect enables us to see our Strength fail, and await the Tokens of our approaching Dissolution with a Kind of awful Pleasure. I will ingenuously own to you, dear Madam, that I experience more true Happiness in the retired Manner of Life that I have embraced, than I ever knew from all the Splendour or Flatteries of the World. There was always a Void: they could not satisfy a rational Mind: and at the most heedless Time of my Youth, I well remember, that I always looked forward, with a Kind of Joy, to a decent Retreat, when the Evening of Life should make it practicable,

Boadicea I have read—there is an interesting Scene or two in it; but there is something wanting in the Management of the Drama to keep up the Spirits of the Audience. *Philo-
clea*

clea I have not seen, nor have heard such a Character of it, as to raise my Curiosity. If you have not read *Deformity*, an Essay, by Mr. HAY, nor his *Religio Philosophi* (I don't know how that last Word should end) I believe they will entertain you very well in their different Ways. The *Adventurer* will soon be published in Volumes, and will be very well worth buying. I doubt I must agree with Mr. SHENSTONE, that the Stile of *Sir Charles Grandison* is too prolix, and yet I don't know any of it I should be willing to part with, except *Harriot Byron's* Conversation with the *Oxonian*, in the first Volume, and the Preparations and Entertainments at *Sir Charles's* Wedding, in the fifth.

When I came home from taking the Air on *Friday*, I was very agreeably surprised to find Lady NORTHUMBERLAND ready to receive me, as I had no Notion of her coming. She had been alarmed with a false Report, that I had not been so well for some days as she left me. I took the Opportunity of shewing her your Letter, and she desired me to make her Compliments to your Ladyship, and tell you, she
 keeps

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keeps no Servant about Lady ELIZABETH, while she is at School, and at her Return will think it necessary to have a Person of a middle Age about her. Such a one she now has about her little Boy; a pretty Sort of Woman, who speaks *French* and *English* equally well, is grave and properly behaved, and, I believe, hopes for Lady ELIZABETH's Place, when her little Angel of a Master goes into the Hands of the Men. His Mamma took him away with her on *Saturday*, after lending him to me for a Month (though she is excessively fond of him) because she sees he is the Joy of my Life. He has some faint Resemblance (though not a good one) of his poor Uncle; but his Openness and Mildness of Temper are the very same. Her eldest Boy too, is a very sensible and good one. He and Lady GREVILLE dine with me from *Eaton* every *Sunday*; they are here at present for two or three Days, on Account of their being Hollidays. I have hardly left myself Room to make Mr. COWSLAD's Compliments, and subscribe myself, dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's
most faithful and obedient Servant,

F. SOMERSET.

L E T;

LETTER LXXIII.

Mr. DODSLEY to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Mr. SHENSTONE, Jan. 5, 1761.

I AM very glad, that with the Return of Spring, your Strength and Spirits begin also to revive. May they proceed and encrease with the Season, and communicate such Health and Vigour to your vernal Shoots, as will encourage and enable them to bud, blossom, and bear; for 'tis Pity, that Fruit of so exquisite a Flavour should be lost to the Taste of Mankind! But your Generosity and Benevolence lead you to cultivate and improve the barren Soil and sorry Shrubs of your Friends, to the Neglect of your own rich Fields and more excellent Plantations. You will see in the *Critical Review* a Character of my Fables sufficient to make me excessively proud, were I not inwardly checked by considering how much they owe to your Correction: but I ought to be proud of that, and I am so. They do not, however, yet appear
to

to be much taken Notice of; but it is early Days, and my Friends encourage me to hope, that when they are known, they will not be neglected. I am much pleased with the further Honour you have done them, in getting new Head and Tail Pieces executed, and shall be very impatient till I see your List of the Subjects.

As to your Picture, you may be sure I long to receive it, as it will at once adorn my Room, and do Honour to myself; and I think farther, that as it will, probably not be much mended by Alteration, the best Way will be to send it up without Delay: but this, however, I leave intirely to your Determination.

I have applied to Mr. RICH, in Behalf of Mr. HERON; but he has no Vacancy in his House, nor Room to employ him: as to Mr. GARRICK, I am not on such Terms, at present, as to ask a Favour of him. I have spoken also to two or three Printers about Mr. W——, but I have not yet been able to hear of any Thing for him—but I will not
give

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give it up: I shall be glad to know what Pay he will expect.

Mr. JENNYNS's Book will be published in about a Fortnight—When Mr. PERCY's will be ready is uncertain. All your Letters are very acceptable to me, as they assure me of your Friendship; therefore, pray write to me as often as you can, though you should have nothing more to say, than to give me that Assurance.

I am, dear Sir,

ever affectionately yours,

R. DODSLEY.

L E T.

LETTER LXXIV.

W. SHENSTONE, Esq. to Mr. DODSLEY.

Dear Mr. DODSLEY, *Feb. 11, 1761.*

I HAVE spoken to Mr. L— upon the Subject of his Dedication; and he agrees with me, that there can be no properer Person to procure the Leave we want, than Mr. D—. Suppress, therefore, if you please, my Letter to Mr. L—, and engage Mr. D— as soon as ever you can, to do his best Offices in this Affair. They wait only for the Plates, and my Lord's Answer, before they can order his Arms to be engraved. I blundered, in regard to L—'s University; a Blunder so much the more unlucky, as they have no Masters of Arts at *Edinburgh*: he was of *Aberdeen*. As to the rest, you will give Mr. D— any proper Information my Letter affords you. L— does not expect a Present; he will be perfectly satisfied if the Work entitle him to any Degree of Lord B—'s esteem: and this Mr. D— may

say, should his Lordship give him an Opportunity. Perhaps it need not be mentioned, that L— is a *Scotchman*, unless my Lord should make particular Enquiry. Betwixt Friends, I believe, that having no Establishment, he means hereafter to ask some little Matter, by Means of a *Scotch* Lady, who is my Lord's Relation.

The smaller Drawing you enclosed is really a perfect Beauty, and must be executed at all Events when I return it, which I mean to do on *Saturday*; I shall give the Engraver one or two Directions.

I wish I could think as highly of the Frontispiece. In Truth, it does not please me; and what to do, I cannot tell. The Designer does not seem to enter into the Spirit of the Story; and the Circumstance of the Shield hung upon the Pillar, (a single Pillar of the Temple had been sufficient) with the Motto being wholly omitted, throws the whole Stress upon the Merit of the two Figures in the fore Ground. I am sorry to say, these do not answer, MÆCENAS appears with no Dignity, and HORACE's Attitude I can't explain. If the Floor had
been

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been raised one Step where the Patron sits, and his Person tall, or his Chair embellished a little, &c. and if HORACE were shorter, (as his Nature was) his Attitude no Way violent, and his Head down-cast, it would, perhaps, have removed some of my Objections. But if there were no Possibility of hanging a Shield, &c. on a Piece of a Temple, and so making the Back-Ground important, (as the Designer surely might have done) yet there evidently were Means of rendering it more beautiful than it appears here. HAYMAN certainly should have been the Man! But more of this when I write on *Saturday*.

When shall I see *Baptista Porta*? As also the Frontispiece only to the Ornaments, &c. of Temples and Churches? The Verses in the *London Magazine* are tolerably well printed, though my Punctuation is not observed. Your Brother was to send me also the *Annual Registers*; all, except that for the Year 1759. I believe W——— has or will desire your Brother to supply him with the few Magazines he distributes here. This Letter is written amid much Hurry and Confusion of Brain,

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X

when

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when I can really express nothing to my Mind,
much less the Esteem and Affection with which
I am,

Dear Sir,

your most obedient,

W. SHENSTONE.

LETTER LXXV.

Mr. W— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

SIR,

Feb. 14, 1761.

YOUR very obliging Letter gave me great
Pleasure; pardon my Delay in not re-
turning my Thanks for that Favour sooner; I
waited to have offered my small Collection to your
View at the same Time, which Dr. W— gen-
teely excused himself from the Trouble of pe-
rusing, professing he had not Leisure or critical
Skill enough to be of Service to the Work.—

When

When my Brother received my Papers at *Birmingham*, he shewed them to Dr. H——, who obligingly asked Leave to shew them to Lord LYTTLTON, which you will imagine was too agreeable an Offer not to be accepted: the Doctor took them to *Hagley*, about a Fortnight since, to be transmitted to his Lordship by Admiral SMITH. As soon as I receive them, I shall immediately do myself the Pleasure of sending them to the *Leasowes*.

To Mr. —— I find myself indebted for the Publication of my Verses to Miss L——, of which, and my Letter to her, she had given him Copies. I received the first Intimation of that Affair from you, but soon after saw the same incorrect Copy, together with his absurd and disadvantageous Account of me, in two different Magazines. I wrote to him upon that Subject; he promised to retract what he had asserted upon Misinformation; but his Letters and Behaviour did not appear quite equal to the amiable Idea I had conceived of him. I am informed by a Friend in Town, that the same Person has sent up a handsome Apology, to be inserted in the *Gentleman's Maga-*

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zine, for *February*, which (as if it were intended purely for the Satisfaction of the Public, and not to do Justice to an injured Person) he did not condescend to honour me with the Perusal of.

I am extremely obliged to you for the Trouble you took in sending a correct Copy of those Verses to the *London Magazine*, which I saw with much Satisfaction. I am also to acknowledge the Favour of your friendly Advice, in Regard to Mr. W——'s Papers; what you say on that Head gives me great Pleasure, as it intirely coincides with my own Sentiments: I had no Thoughts of inserting those Papers in my Collection, but looked upon them as Things of a private Nature, intended only for the Amusement of ourselves.

When last I saw that Gentleman, he mentioned my adding those to the Number I intended to print; had I directly objected to it, I had some Reason to think it would disgust him: he mentioned referring it to you, which I agreed to with Pleasure, resolving to give it a fair Chance, not doubting but your Judgment
and

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and Delicacy would disapprove of such an Addition to my little Volume: (that is to be.) I have not yet wrote to Mr. W——, but shall take an early Opportunity of letting him know your Opinion, which cannot (I think) be any Diminution of the Pleasure he may take in his Composition, as it is only the Subject which denies it a Place in my Collection.

I am, Sir,

with great Esteem,

your much obliged, humble Servant,

M. W—.

LETTER LXXVI.

Mr. M—— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Sir, *Edinburgh, April 15, 1761.*

IT is not in my Power to express the grateful Sense of the Obligations I owe you, for your most agreeable Letter, and for those valuable Pieces which accompanied it, and your other Favours. I am sensible, that so late a Return to such repeated Marks of Goodness, carries with it Appearances against me; but as I am convinced, your Good-nature cannot interpret any Thing harshly, I hold it as almost unnecessary to assure you, that Neglect was not the Cause of my Silence; that, indeed, would have been a Fault for which I could not have forgiven myself, far less could I have asked Forgiveness of you; the Hurry of Business, during the Winter Sessions, is the only Excuse I shall plead in my Defence, which but too effectually deprived me of the Pleasure of corresponding with my Friends, and cut me off from all Communication with Elegance or the fine Arts—and of late, an Inflammation in my
Eyes

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Eyes has much distressed me, which at present gives the more Pain, as it prevents me from the Satisfaction of writing so fully as I intended, and from giving you any Remarks on those Pearls you was so good as to send me; the chief Intention of this is to assure you, that I have not been unmindful of your Friend Mr. PERCY, whose Design I much approve of, and the more especially, as he has given you a rejecting Power. Please to let him know that I have written to my Friends every where, to pick up all the Ballads they can, while I am searching every Part in Town, where I suspect any Thing may be found worthy of Publication. In a short Time I hope to have it in my Power to transmit you some Pieces which will merit a Place in his Collection.

Although it is not without some Difficulty that I now write, yet I cannot leave off without letting you know, how much I was delighted with your excellent Verses, intended for the Pedestal of *Venus de Medicis*:* but all the Encomiums that I can give them (or your

* "To VENUS, VENUS here retir'd," &c. See the last Composition, in the Description of the *Leasowes*. SHENSTONE's Works.

other Compositions) fall infinitely short of their real Value. The Thoughts are fine, and rise naturally from the Subject; the three first Stanzas shew, indeed, the Hand of a Master, nor do I remember any Thing of Antiquity superior to them for Elegance and Simplicity of Versification, Justness of Sentiment, or Beauty of Allusion; nothing can be more happily imagined, than the Opposition of your bashful Beauty to the *Paphian* and *Pbrygian* Goddesses, while the Choice of Words does Honour to the Truth and Beauty of the Sentiment. The seventh is charming, and the Epithet *Meretricious* conveys so striking a Description of false Taste, and is so well adapted to the fulsome carving and gilding of *Chinese* Baubles, that he must be dull indeed who is not struck by it. It irks me, that I am obliged to defer taking Notice of the other Pieces till another Time.

I had lately the Pleasure of a Visit from your Friend Mr. COOKES, whose Connection with you I wish I had known sooner. I shall take the first Opportunity of sending you the Anandale Bronze Earth he mentioned. In the
mean

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mean Time, I have sent you a little Provision of the best *Preston-Pans* Snuff, both toasted and untoasted, in four Bottles, with one Bottle of Highland Snishon, and four Bottle Bonnets, all packed in a Box, along with some Things for our worthy Friend Dr. ROEBUCK, at *Birmingham*, which I hope you will accept of, as a small Stimulus to our Friendship. Please to let me know, which Sort is most agreeable, that I may send you a fresh Supply in due Time.

The good Lord ALEMOOR is just now getting the better of a tedious Fit of the Gout; he returns you his kindest Respects, and bids me assure you in the strongest Manner, of his most cordial Esteem, that he would be happy to hear from you, but much more to see you in this Corner of the World. Professor SMITH, DOUGLAS, HUME, Dr. ROBERTSON, (now Principal of our University here) and many other of your Friends, desire me to return you their Compliments centuplicated. Allow me a small Share in your Friendship, and believe that I am, with the utmost Esteem, dear Sir,

your much obliged, and very sincere Servant,

J. M——.

L E T-

LETTER LXXVII.

Mr. DODSLEY to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Dear Mr. SHENSTONE, Sept. 18, 1761.

AFTER I parted from you at *Broomsgrove*, I arrived very safe and speedily at *Worcester*, as I hope you did at the *Leasowes*. I found Dr. D— in the same infirm State of Health, in which he has lingered for some Years past; but by keeping up his Spirits and his Appetite, by great Temperance, and by taking an Airing regularly twice a Day in his Chaise, for six or eight Miles at a Time, he has so nicely trimmed his feeble Lamp of Life, that he has prevented it from going out, and may possibly preserve it burning some few Years longer. I employed Mrs. D— to get me a Pot of Lampreys, which I sent, Carriage paid, to be left for you at Mr. HODGETT's: I hope you received them safe, and that they proved good.

On

On the *Monday* following, I went from *Worcester*, in the *Birmingham* Stage, to *Bristol*, and the next Morning in a Post-Chaise to *Bath*. I found a Letter at *LEAKE's*, which had lain for me eight or ten Days, and the Morning after my Arrival received another, both earnestly pressing my Return; I set out again, therefore, in two or three Days for *London*, where, without the least Fatigue, on *Tuesday* last I arrived. If I can be of any Service to the Widow, I shall be very glad; but I am afraid the Father is inclined to take every Advantage which the Law will allow him.

At *Bath*, I saw Mr. *MELMOTH*, who arrived there with his Lady the Day before I set out. He laments very much his Misfortune in missing you at the *Leasowes*: but hopes he shall have the Pleasure of seeing you some Time or other at *Bath*, where for the future (except two or three Months in the Winter, which he will dedicate to his Friends in *London*) he intends to reside. I spent a Day with Mr. *W—*, who is meditating an Essay on *Simplicity*, of which he shewed me an imperfect Plan, and
some

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some few Sketches of the Work; he considers it in Sentiments, Language, Actions, and Works of Art, and I fancy will make a good Performance of it. I spent also a Day with Mr. GRAVES. Mr. ALLEN has built him a good additional Room, and a handsome School. He is very earnest in his Wishes, that you would pursue your Subscription without farther Delay, and desires that I will press you to it without Intermission; I told him, I had said all I could, and hoped you would proceed. You are in the Meridian of your Fame, he says, and should not let your Sun decline one Moment, before you put your Work in Agitation.

I am, dear Sir, with great Truth,

affectionately yours,

R. DODSLEY.

L E T.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Mr. T. L— to W. SHENSTONE, Esq.

Northfield, Oct. 18, 1761.

THAT the Polite must ever please equally in the Matter and Manner is what I am not now to learn, having had convincing Proof of it, ever since I have had the pleasing Honour of being known to Mr. SHENSTONE. To comprehend in a Nut-Shell a Volume of Ideas, is the happy Talent of a superior Genius, which those of the more minute, at a Distance, admire, but cannot attain; at least, in our dull Profession, the Difficulties attending such an Attempt are almost insuperable. It can't have escaped so penetrating an Observation as Mr. SHENSTONE's, that bad Men examine every Law with no other Intention than to reap the Benefits, and at the same Time to evade the equal Contributions intended to be levied from all those, who, as they enjoy the Benefits, ought in Reason to contribute their just Proportions of the Expences incurred by those,

to whom they are indebted for those Advantages. Against such artful and mischievous Examiners, it is the Duty of those of our dull Profession to be upon our Guard, and to protect, by all the Vigilance we are able, the honest and well-meaning from the Artifices and Designs of the dishonest and ungenerous. Few Words, alas! however significant, are not able to effect such a Security; and though Dullness has been the unfortunate Cause of introducing a Multiplicity of useless Tautology in many legal Transactions, yet the necessary Cautions, requisite to protect the undesigning from the Dangers of Fraud, from those who are the Pests of Society, have unhappily made some Repetitions necessary in many Cases, where a liberal Interpretation, and Elegance of Expression would point them out as unnecessary, and place them in a ridiculous, and, indeed, contemptible Light, in the Judgment of a liberal and generous Observer, unacquainted with the hackneyed Ways of bad and designing Men. But, alas! Such Men there are—such must be guarded against; and to aid me in such an *Herculean* Labour, to unite Force, and introduce, at the same Time, Dignity of Expression
and

and Elegance, instead of dull Form, I took the Liberty of requesting the Aid of a *Pen-Shenstonian*! I return my very sincere Thanks for the kind Assistance you have been so good as to give me; and, as far as the Cautions I am obliged to observe, in order to guard against the Inconveniences I have before hinted at, will permit me, shall profit by them; and as I foresee many Difficulties that may be likely to arise before the Benefits we wish for from the intended Act may be brought to Perfection, I shall take the Liberty you so obligingly permit me, of desiring the Assistance and Honour of your Advice, where I have Occasion for it.

If I was much susceptible of Vanity, I should have ample Food for it in indulging the Belief you flatter me with, that a Correspondence from ————— could give you any Pleasure or Entertainment: but I am not yet so vain—Plain Facts, and plain Truth and Sincerity, are all that I can aim at in a Correspondence; nor can I think, that simple Narratives, unaided with any Embellishments of Genius, or Liveliness of Fancy, can give Pleasure to a Mind so stored with brilliant Ideas

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as Mr. SHENSTONE's; yet permit me to assure you, if you honour me with any Commands, I shall take a very sincere Pleasure in obeying them.

You have much damped the pleasing Expectations I had formed of seeing you in ——— but I yet can't help indulging an Hope, that we yet may, by some happy Event that may deserve your Attention there, be gratified with that Pleasure the ensuing Winter. But wherever you are, permit me very sincerely to wish you every Felicity, and to join in a particular Assurance, with the general Assurances which I am desired to add from all this Family, that they are, as I am,

Dear Sir,

your faithful and obedient Servant;



T. L—,

END of the FIRST VOLUME.

